



With you in prayer & faith
Yours affectionately
G. S. Rajlton

Photo taken the day before his death

COMMISSIONER RAILTON

1484

By two of his Comrade Officers :

EILEEN DOUGLAS

AND

MILDRED DUFF

With Preface by

GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH

*'The world's wealth is in its original
men. By these and their works it is built
and not a waste. Their memory and their
record are its sacred property for ever*

—G. A. V. R.



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PREFACE

BY GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH

THE following pages are a not unworthy attempt to describe something of the life and character of a remarkable man. They have been written in the presence of unusual difficulties. Much of the groundwork was done by our late gifted comrade, Brigadier Eileen Douglas, who died when her manuscript was about to receive its first revision. The Great War and the difficulties arising out of it involved the laying aside of the project for some time. When later, at my request, Commissioner Mildred Duff undertook to arrange the material which had already been gathered and to finish the book, other difficulties, quite unforeseen when the work was commenced (and which need not be further referred to here) intervened and led to another delay.

Now, at length, however, the work is complete, and whatever opinions may be held of its literary merit, I venture to claim for it that it does give a striking and vivid picture of our dear comrade and friend, GEORGE SCOTT RAILTON, the first Commissioner of The Salvation Army.

Commissioner Duff asks me to supply, by way of introduction to the book, a few words of general review of Commissioner Railton, which my long intimacy with him may, perhaps, make of interest.

My personal estimate of his character is quoted in the following pages; but looking over the forty years of our union and friendship, I find that one or two reflections take a prominent place in my mind.

1. I am very conscious of the influence towards freedom for The Salvation Army which Railton exerted. He came into the councils of our Founders at the time of many of their first great departures from the traditions and conventions which had so long trammelled them and bound the Churches to which they had belonged. He was himself already both familiar and dissatisfied with much in the attitude of the organized religion of the day towards the common people. He was a younger man than William Booth, and was perhaps more familiar than he with much of the inner life of the religious communities around him. He saw and admired much in that life, and to the end of his days never completely broke with its influence; but he had felt also the deadly consequences of formality in separating even the highest and choicest spiritual forces from the people. He saw not only the appalling impotence, so far as influencing the life of the masses was concerned, of dead Churches, but also the helplessness of many communities not dead—undoubtedly alive—to do anything effective for the Salvation of the multitudes around them, and he believed that this was in large measure because of their bondage to certain rigid lines of thought and action and to particular ceremonials. He not only saw all this, but had searched into its causes with a fearless love of truth.

I make no doubt but that this was an invaluable preparation for the part he was to play in our Movement—especially in its early and formative years. My dear Father was, as he often said, *thrust* into many

of the departures which the work took by the overwhelming influences of the hour, often finding their justification after the event rather than discerning their wisdom beforehand. He was in many matters diffident and nervous—especially at that time—when leaving the track of the spiritual fathers and leaders of the past, leaning by virtue of habit—nay, clinging with affection—to the old paths, and often doubting whether the success, or apparent success, of this or that new route could really compensate for the solid advantages and ripened beauties of the older if longer roads.

In such circumstances Railton's enthusiasm, experiences, and convictions became powerful auxiliaries and great encouragements. He was out and out with The General and my dear Mother in every new departure. He was all for letting the new life—God's first work in The Salvation Army—find its own ways of expansion, of selection, of reproduction. He was ready to contend with all the world that it was a radical mistake to suppose that because that life was from God, it must take the same ways of expression as those taken by kindred Divine gifts in the past.

Thus The Salvation Army is deeply indebted to this man. He helped to set us free. He was used in no small measure to emancipate our scheme of things from 'the vain traditions of the elders,' from formalities the value of which has passed away for ever, and from those so-called sacred things that belong to the same family as the ordinances which Paul declared were nailed to the cross of Christ.

2. There is a sense in which Commissioner Railton grew up in The Army to spiritual manhood and entered the opening years of what would no doubt have proved, had he lived, his spiritual maturity.

The growth of any soul is a wonderful and delightful study, and I was privileged to know something of the progress of God's work in the development of my dear comrade. He did undoubtedly advance in the knowledge and love of God and in the unselfish service of man. But it always seemed to me that, from the beginning to the end of his career, it was *his simple and rock-like faith* which was his chief spiritual characteristic.

His childlike confidence in God in all the concerns of his personal life and experience was, of course, the first and simplest manifestation of this; but it was also to be found in his complete abandonment to the work for souls. He carried this into all he did to such a degree that it could be sometimes likened to a kind of fatalism in him. As an illustration of what I mean, I would name his confidence in the results which would follow his public speaking. He was not—and he knew it, and almost found satisfaction in the fact—at all an accomplished speaker. He frequently left his sentences very incomplete, if not unfinished. He sometimes used arguments which he must have seen were only half considered. He made statements which one would think he must have seen were certain to offend, if not to wound, some of his hearers; and, while setting forth new thoughts, would so mingle his words with old-fashioned phraseology as to produce something of confusion in the minds of the hearers. Yet his messages were often extremely effective, the intensely sincere and ardent personality which was shining through them carrying all before him. He felt his confidence in God, therefore, to be justified, and it carried him through with comparative ease. He never wanted to talk if any one else would do so, but he was always delightfully ready, and possessed

of an assurance of accomplishing something by what he said that was both the delight and despair of many of his comrades. And he certainly did accomplish something; few of the many thousands of Services he conducted were unfruitful.

But this faith was seen also in his confidence in God for The Army down to his very last days on earth. He never wavered here. He had in the course of his life times of difference with his Leaders on matters of more or less importance, and as a consequence both he and they suffered no little pain and anxiety; but even in these experiences his absolute confidence in the Divine origin of the work, and in the ultimate Divine guidance of its administrators, brought him through into calmer waters. In these, as in other storms, he could indeed say with Paul, '*I believe God.*'

3. Commissioner Railton was a pioneer of our Work in many lands. His was the first Salvationist voice raised to proclaim our message in one country after another. He thus became a considerable traveller. His journeys probably represented in the matter of distance a *score* of completed journeys round the world, and his absences from England after 1882 involved a longer period than the time he spent at home. These travels, and the work associated with them, brought him into intimate touch with the peoples of a great part of the earth. His knowledge of languages—and he had a remarkable facility for acquiring them—opened his way to multitudes. He cultivated and studied, of course, especially the common people; but the fact that he was a travelled Englishman having an acquaintance with their own tongue, made him welcome also among more thoughtful and educated persons everywhere. They were only too glad to show

him the views and experiences which too often are hidden from visitors, even from those with the best intentions.

He was able to observe the leading religions of the world and to judge of their fruit in the lives of the people who professed them, and to do it in a way open to very few men of his generation, or indeed of any generation. Half the literature of the world was open to him, and his ability to gather impressions from their current prints, of the contemporary life of the nations among whom he sojourned, was quite unusual.

He had an attractive presence, and found little difficulty in making himself welcome in any company, so that whether in the slums of Whitechapel or the Ginza of Tokio, the Quays of Constantinople or the Lecture Room of a German or American University, he got to close quarters with, and came really to know something of the inner life of, the people.

It moves me deeply to reflect that in all this he never wavered in his early conviction that the knowledge of God is the great need of man, and that the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the only way of reconciliation and peace for the human spirit. It was not only that he saw, in his Army work, glorious evidences of the unnumbered blessings those things bring, but it was as though as the years passed, and he more and more came to understand mankind, its temptations, its capacities, its environment, he realized the wonderful *fitness* of the great thing we call Salvation to the foundation requirements of the human soul, whether weak or strong, whether high or low.

And it was this apprehension, this deep-rooted consciousness of having *found the remedy* for the two great woes of humanity—sin and sorrow—which made the wonderful gladness of his life. It was indeed this

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which supplied that undertone of thanksgiving that was heard continually by all who knew him, and which was a kind of heavenly music accompanying him in all his wanderings, and ever rising above the storm to inspire him in all his conflicts.

*See a mortal man, in righteousness
Built up, in whom the oracles of Truth
Are deep engraved—he is a glorious Hymn
Of Praise to God.*

BRAMWELL BOOTH.

INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS,

LONDON,

March, 1920.

INTRODUCTION

A passion for souls marked his religious life from the first to the very last. His whole conception of the service of God was expressed in two words, *Holiness and Warfare*.—GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH.

TO write the life of George Scott Railton looks at first sight like taking an unwarrantable liberty with one who had, as far as his personal work was concerned, such an innate dislike for publicity. But, remembering another side of his character, he would surely have answered, could he have been consulted, 'If you think anything in my life could possibly help any one, go ahead, never mind me!'

Any attempt to place him on a pedestal beyond the reach of ordinary people would be a gross injustice to his much-loved memory. His goodness was nothing if not inspiring. That was its beauty. Even the humblest never said in excuse for their own shortcomings or in fruitless longings, 'He's different from ordinary people.' Rather, as one young man who had lived and worked with him expresses it: 'His noble, consistent, and holy life not only won my love and admiration for the Commissioner himself, but set me longing to be, like him, a simple, whole-hearted Soldier of the Saviour.' Manifesting many of the contradictions which always seem to accompany genius, he was often misunderstood. Some people deemed him narrow, unwise, eccentric, or lacking in judgment; but never was there a breath against his consistent, selfless life and walk. Even his censors unanimously agreed, 'But he was so good!' A journalist writes after his death:

'One feature about him impressed me more than another in the occasional talks I had with him, and that

was the exceeding breadth of his charity. He was one of those people who could see the gold of men's characters under all the dust of creed and formalism.' No; his worst enemy—if he ever had one—could never accuse 'R.' of being uncharitable.

He was a man of one idea; everything came second to his great work of saving souls. 'He was a visionary,' was sometimes said; but rather he was a man of vision, a 'seer,' with a definite message to his generation. Nothing on earth had the least importance compared with lifting up Jesus Christ before a dying world. This was the business of his life. The humble, childlike spirit that led him, a lad barely in his teens, to offer himself and all he had to God, was his to the very end.

And the price he paid for this unbroken consecration, was it worth it all? We have his own word on this, written a very few years before his death:

'In Thy presence, O Lord, there is fullness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Thank God, I have proved it in boyhood and youth, in manhood and grey hairs; on sea and land, at home and abroad, alone and in company with multitudes of comrades from many lands all gathered round the banner of Christ. So may no call of pleasure, of learning, or of worldly progress ever draw any of us aside from our chief joy: "Jesus, the Light of the world."'

Many, no doubt, could not only endorse, but add to all that we have said, but fewer, perhaps, understood what a well-trained and cultured mind he possessed. His great natural humility, added to his constant fear of getting out of touch with the lowest, poorest, and most ignorant, kept his accomplishments well in the background. For instance, few realized what a linguist he was, using four or five languages with ease, and having a partial knowledge of others. He read continually, history, travel, biography, newspapers, and 'The War Cry' in many languages; anything and everything that dealt with human life and living, always with the proviso that it was true. Anything of a purely fictitious nature had no interest for him.

Whilst he had deep-rooted antipathy to argument, he was a past master in the art, though he only used this weapon when absolutely necessary. It was an astounding revelation occasionally to philosopher and sceptic to find in this Salvation Army Commissioner one that could meet them on their own ground and drive them into a corner. As The General says: 'He answered the rebellious and critical by each other and silenced them all by the last specimen of "Broken Earthenware" that he had picked up in the slums, and that none of them could account for!'

But, above all else, he read his Bible. That was always the first book to him. He studied it when a little boy at school, and he continued to study it through youth and middle age; though he had scant patience with those students who failed to translate the Bible into everyday practical obedience; and when they laid his lifeless body down in the Cologne Army Quarters, the little Bible was there close to his silent heart.

Needless to say, he was a man of prayer. 'For God's sake, don't stop that praying,' was his answer to a young Officer into whose Prayer Meeting he had slipped one Sunday evening, and who naturally wanted the Commissioner to speak to his people. The Officer received that night such a new appreciation of the value of prayer as changed his whole outlook on life.

This book can scarcely be considered an adequate record of the forty hard-working years spent by one who was a sharer in the very making of this now world-wide Organization. But the Commissioner gloried in keeping himself and his doings in the background. Had he but kept a journal what a wealth of material we might have possessed! But he always treated this suggestion as a huge joke. Two years before his death, however, he began a sort of private autobiography for the benefit of his children. It did not get on very fast, nor go very far, nevertheless we are grateful for this precious scrap of life-history. And, after all, his great work for The Salvation Army lies where the names of the Twelve Apostles are found in the New Jerusalem

—in the foundations—and he was well content to have it so.

In considering the life of The Salvation Army's first Commissioner as a whole, General Bramwell Booth truly says: 'Railton was a *founder*, and his great strength lay in his consecration to those seven principles in which we still believe that our power lies:

'Reliance on Divine Providence.

'An almighty conception of the evil of sin.

'Unfathomable confidence in God's power to save to the uttermost.

'Simple faith in the Blood of Jesus and the Atonement.

'Love for the poor and the people.

'Utter disregard for his own interests.

'Willingness to try new methods of adaptation and attack.'

No more fitting conclusion to this introduction could be given than the words with which the Commissioner prefaced the Life-story of one of his friends and comrades. We reprint them as they stand:

'If this life only becomes to all our readers the lesson that it was to those of us who had the privilege to see it lived for years before our eyes, it will be an ever-widening power in the hands of God to raise them each one to the glorious level of our comrade's faith, love, humility, and devotion.

'Excuse my pleading with every reader to pray much over this book. The best of us have a sort of fancy that the Bible should be read with prayer, but that other books are rather to be taken up and laid down anyhow. But what is the use of any book if God Himself does not speak to us through it?

'If you read no book without such a desire and expectation how select your reading would be!

'Oh, that we may become more and more a heavenly-minded people, capable of holding fellowship with God and His saints! Then shall we in our day confound the sceptics, and raise up an irresistible host of true devotees to Jesus Christ such as this man was, and is, Hallelujah! for he is "alive for ever more."'



CHAPTER I

The Child

‘Have I not a right to look upon myself as a physical product of missions with such parents? Could I be anything less than a born brother to men of every race, and especially to the very lowest?’—G. S. R., 1912.

IN order rightly to understand the character of Commissioner George Scott Railton, it is necessary first to glance at his antecedents and the setting of his early life.

Launcelot Railton, the Commissioner’s father, was born in 1812. He was training for a schoolmaster when his conversion, at the age of eighteen, changed his outlook entirely; and, giving up his profession a couple of years later, he became a Wesleyan Methodist minister, or rather missionary, consecrating his life to the coloured people of the West Indies.

He was a man of strong principles and one of the first few in England who dared to ‘make fools of themselves’ by signing the temperance pledge. He was also a Methodist when Methodism was only another word for that which was extreme, narrow-minded, and fanatical.

He met his future wife, Margaret Scott, in Antigua. She was a Scottish girl from Edinburgh, and in her very early days had consecrated her life to her Saviour’s service. Also a teacher by profession, she had heard the call to the Mission Field, which came to her through her brother, the Rev. Dr. George Scott, after whom she later named her second son, the subject of this sketch.

Launcelot Railton soon fell in love with the missionary teacher, and they were married in Antigua, where their eldest son, Launcelot, was born in the year 1843. Six happy years of service followed for both, till they were obliged by ill health to return to their native land, where, in the Wesleyan Manse at Arbroath, Scotland, little George Scott was born on July 6, 1849. It was this fact, added to his mother's Scottish descent, which gave him the much-prized privilege of proclaiming himself a Scotsman.

To their mother's spirit and influence her sons owed much, and we can trace in her character many of those qualities which made the Commissioner's life and work in later years so remarkable. His own chivalrous consideration for women had probably its source in his love and respect for her, whilst in his brightness, love of singing, and boundless pity for those in need, he also gained insensibly from her example. A contemporary, in 1912, writes :

'Your mother was a true sister of the people, a succourer of many. Her ministrations to her husband's flock and to the distressed hand-loom weavers of that time were unique and continuous.

'She also gathered the juvenile missionary collectors at the Manse once a month, and told us stories about her West Indian experience. Her missionary poems, signed "Margaret," in the *Juvenile Offering*, were eagerly looked for by our little band. Her sweet, bright nature had a wondrous charm; her kindness to me, a timid, motherless girl of fourteen, I shall never forget.'

Margaret Railton's children grew up in an atmosphere of love—a happy sanctified human love that stretched out and embraced all mankind. Many a time the boys lay in their little beds and watched their mother on her return from a call on some poor person go thoughtfully through the rooms, stripping the beds of any covering that she thought could be spared, and then heard her descend upon the pantry, and finally carry off her plunder to some family in dire need.

This sharing of their goods seemed the most natural thing in the world to the Railton children; the unnatural thing for them would have been to keep anything they could by any contrivance spare! How truly one of her sons drank in her spirit many Salvationists labouring in far-off corners of the earth could testify.

Of his early surroundings George Scott Railton had few memories, and the system of Methodist ministers moving every three years naturally blurred those he had. But the personality of his father and mother he remembered well, and writing as late as 1912 about his almost baby days, he says:

‘My earliest recollections are like garden scenes, unmarred by any jarring note outside of my own little rebel heart and life. My mother, though far from well at times, was almost always singing. My father, though too much absorbed in his work for us to have much of his company, gave us a not less cheery view of Christ’s service. Naturally quiet, humble, and reserved, he just went about doing good in the humdrum round of country circuit life, better pleased to walk six miles and preach in a farmer’s kitchen than to stand up before the largest and most appreciative of his town audiences.

‘My father took me with him occasionally to some of his preaching appointments, and many of my sweetest memories of those days are connected with religion; though I am not sure that I did not more enjoy the Prayer Meetings held in our big kitchen, chiefly because they brought the rare privilege of sitting up till all was over, with the fun of seeing forms brought in, and all the place transformed for the occasion into a Meeting-room, and then the prospect of coffee and buns to finish with.

‘One Sunday there was held close by a Camp Meeting, at which various preachers spoke all day from wagons. That also seemed more enjoyable than sitting in chapel.

‘We always had singing mixed with our family

prayers, and indeed with everything else in our home. It was here I first learned :

Oh, the Blood of Jesus, the precious Blood of Jesus !
Oh, the Blood of Jesus, it cleanses from all sin !

as a chorus to " There is a Fountain filled with Blood. "

' We always entertained at our home every preacher who came to the chapel during my father's absence, and I noticed as a child that my mother's attitude towards all was regulated not by their position or education, but by her opinion of their piety.

' On Sunday afternoons my mother had a class at home, and I was always allowed to be in the room, though I sat with my own Scripture picture-book on a low stool, and was not supposed to be occupied with the people. Altogether Sunday to me was an unusually pleasant day, in spite of the absence of all plays or walks. . . .

' The picture that I remember best in the old house was the famous one of the child Samuel at prayer. Once I was found in our backyard riding a broom-handle at the utmost possible speed to the rescue of Kirjath-Jearim, having swallowed that name, and the idea, at family prayers.

' Never can I be too grateful for the care with which my mother peopled my world with God's stories. To me the reality of all that was in the Bible became as absolutely fixed as any visible thing.

' I cannot remember ever taking any special notice of anybody's preaching during those early years. It was always the singing and the praying that made whatever impression I can recollect.'

This early influence it may have been which later led the Commissioner to attach such importance to prayer and singing in Salvation Army Meetings. He evidently had scant use for ' preaching ' from his earliest youth. In these days of child study and moral suasion, his views upon corporal punishment and its effect upon himself will be of interest to some parents :

My dear mother made upon me an unalterable impression in favour of the old-fashioned whippin^g

system, to which I ever cling. She made me absolutely sure, firstly, that nothing could by any possibility remain hidden from her; and, secondly, that upon the discovery of any wilful disobedience or other conduct deserving of it, a whipping would follow. She made of whipping always a solemn means of grace. She never struck one of us an odd blow. When worthy of the whipping I would be sent upstairs, and then before punishment she always prayed with me and talked with me as to the will of God until I felt intensely my guilt before Him and longed for the whipping to be over. I do not believe the whipping itself was over-severe, or needed to be, but it was all terrible enough to be a perpetual safeguard against every temptation, and an eternal memory for good.

'The wisdom of the plan always strikes me as opposed to the weak folly that either leaves children unchecked or inflicts such punishments as shutting up, or putting to bed, which really affects the rest of the family more than the culprit, and cannot constitute anything like the same dread which I felt.

'The texts most effectually put into me were: "Thou God seest me," "Lying lips are an abomination unto the Lord," "The eye that mocketh at his father and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out," "Though hand join in hand, sin shall not go unpunished."

These verses seem strangely opposite to those most commonly chosen for the children of to-day, but they are characteristic of that special era. The dawning spiritual life of little George was, as he himself found in the light of mature years, a strange contradiction. Yet we see how wonderfully it enabled him in the days ahead to grapple with and win those who had spent a lifetime in rebellion against God. He says:

'My parents did all that the dearest and best and most conscientious could to guard me from all evil, and to win me for God; but the clearest light they could give, and the alluring influence of their quietly joyous and constant service to God and men, only made more

terribly evident my own natural dislike to God and to His service in any form.'

The mere externals of Church and Prayer Meeting he found interesting—except the sermons! He had his own plan of whiling away their time in a never-ending query as to 'what I should discover beyond the ventilators in the roof, if I might climb up there!' But one Sunday, when about seven and a half years old, he recalls that:

'The Doctor who had preached being in the town only for that morning, determined not only to hold a Prayer Meeting, but to try and find out all present who did not pray.

'He invited those who remained to come down in the centre of the chapel, and went round questioning all present who did not seem to be praying. My only brother, six years older than myself, had stayed with me in our curtained-off pew, but getting afraid of a personal examination, he crept away into a curtained enclosure generally occupied by the Choir.

'The Doctor, noticing the stratagem, prayed God specially to speak to any present who were seeking to hide themselves. The prayer was very rapidly answered in my case. I felt so guilty and conscious of the desire to avoid having anything to do with Him, that I resolved whenever the Meeting should close to go and pray at home. I did so, and had hardly got on my knees when my brother coming in behind me remarked, "Oh, that will last about a fortnight!" Discouraged I rose up, never to try praying again till my conversion, three years later.

'And those were the years, strange though it may seem, of the most desperate resistance to every heavenly influence. Hedged in as I was from all outward form of sin, I the more resolutely set myself to learn bad language for the mere secret pleasure of giving myself up to cursing and blasphemy. My temper became so violent that on two trivial occasions it was only want of strength that prevented me from taking my brother's life!

‘ But far more than in any outward wrong was the need of a new birth evident in the extreme desire to keep away from God, which was in my case the more curious in view of the good inclinations He had repeatedly created within me. Not only had I always fully believed all that was told me of Him, and the consequences in this world and eternity of neglecting His Salvation, but I had again and again felt a great interest in the missionary enterprise which was so constantly uppermost in my parents’ minds. I even organized a Juvenile Missionary Society in company with some school-fellows when I was only eight years old, and I had no small pride in my missionary parentage, nor do I think I ever had the misfortune of having a really bad companion.

‘ I also became interested in the British and Foreign Bible Society, for which I was a collector; nor can I remember that any of my dreams of future life were disconnected from some missionary purpose; but none of these things in the least prevented that complete turning away of my heart from God, which is, alas! common to all mankind.

‘ I would *not* have God to rule over me; nobody was ever more entirely resolved to go his own way—the world’s way—than I was. That Christ was indispensable as a Saviour when one came to dying, I was fully persuaded; but then He, when He was dying for us, had pardoned the dying thief, so I could reckon upon His mercy up to the last moment! Until then I determined to live independently of God, and reckoned I could do very well without Him.’

This was all right for a time. But a much-dreaded influenza epidemic appeared in Cumberland, where the family then lived, and many were the stories rife of its fell work. One phase of it was especially disconcerting to the boy, then only ten years old. They said that the disease attacked ‘very strong people,’ and was just like a bad cold at first. But that this rapidly developed, and almost before the victim knew it he was in a high fever, had become unconscious, and ere

there was time to think of danger his power to pray or speak had gone.

When George awoke one morning in the clutches of an unmistakable 'bad cold' he faced the situation characteristically. 'Now,' he reasoned, 'influenza is upon me, and if I lose consciousness and die as I am now—determined to have nothing to do with God—I am lost for ever!' All day he thought the matter over, and at last made up his mind that when the family went to the Prayer Meeting that evening he would earnestly seek Salvation.

A conversation that he overheard that afternoon between his mother and some visiting friends fully explained what was meant by 'believing in Jesus,' a term he had heard much used during a recent Revival, and had pondered over not a little. His puzzle was that while he 'believed' as fully as any one in all that was said about Christ and Salvation, his belief brought him no nearer to the Saviour. His mother's friend, in relating how she had recently explained 'saving faith' to a seeking soul, unconsciously enlightened the puzzled, listening child.

'I asked her,' she said, "'What would you do if you had only five minutes more to live?" "What would I do?" the woman answered. "There would be no time for any good works or even many prayers. I should just have to leave myself in God's hands, and say to Him, Now I trust You to pardon a poor guilty sinner, and if You let me perish I cannot help it!"' The story of that all-important evening he tells himself:

'As soon as they had gone to the Chapel Service, I began to sing to myself that blessed song:

Depth of mercy! Can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?

The second verse:

I have long withstood His grace,
Long provoked Him to His face,

so precisely pictured my story, that as God gave me to see it all, my heart was filled with shame and grief.

But I went on to press upon myself those grand final lines :

God is love, I know, I feel,
Jesus lives, and loves me still,

until their glorious message in all its fullness gladdened my heart.

‘The joy of God made me for the moment completely free from the headache and pains that had burdened me all the day. I marched round the little room singing and praising the Lord until I found out that even that joy did not entirely banish pain and weariness! Then I rested, until hearing my mother at the front door I rushed to tell her the good news that I was born again.

‘And there was no mistake about the fact. After a really good night’s sleep, I awoke, not much better physically, but with my heart full of the love of Christ and the desire to go and tell others about Him. I could not imagine how one could remain indifferent to such a Saviour who knew what He could and would do in a moment for any seeking soul.’

Great as were the victories and wonders of the Commissioner’s later life, there is surely nothing more significant and stirring than this record of how he, as a boy of ten years old, was led by such distinct steps to experience the full assurance of Salvation. Writing of this moment the year before his death, he says :

‘In the fifty years that have rolled by since, I have, alas! found out how fast the Devil can hold his captives, whether amidst the most charming lights of a godly home, or in the utter darkness of a heathen one. I have found that ever fully to keep the faith demands a daily desperate fight in every soul. But I have never had the slightest reason to doubt that Jesus Himself set my soul free in that little room that Sunday evening on February 19, 1860. I was born of His Spirit, washed in His Blood, and made truly a child of God, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ of all the glory that shall follow.’

CHAPTER II

The Schoolboy

'I have never had any reason to doubt that God that very moment cleansed and filled my soul. He has kept absolute and complete possession of me ever since. I do not care to inquire what I have or have not been or done since. But about His side of the bargain there can never be doubt. He has done for me exceeding abundantly above all I could then understand, or ask, or think. He is my all in all.'—G. S. R., 1912.

WHEN about seven and a half years of age little George was considered old enough to go to school. Thanks to his mother, he could now read and write fairly well.

While in general disapproving of the modern trend of education, 'This first school,' he says in later years, 'was for all practical purposes far superior to any with which I have since become acquainted. Mr. Harper, the headmaster, was a really kind, fatherly man, but so managed to show us his sterner side and to keep discipline ever in view, that he exercised upon us all the power of the law, and made us give all diligence in every line. In arithmetic he revealed, I think, special skill; everybody was put in competition with every other in his class; care was taken fully to explain to each of us every rule as we came to it, and then we just had to work right through the book. Any one discovered copying or looking into a key had to start afresh at the beginning of the book.

'Mr. Harper had my mother's own sensible view as to punishment. I never remember any keeping-in or line-writing at that school. We were caned and finished with for every fault at the moment.

'He was also a truly religious man. He opened the school daily with earnest prayer. Anything like impure conduct or bad language would have been thought disgraceful by any of us.'

Strange as it may seem in one so young, the development of George's spiritual life had a marked influence upon his education. He says: 'From the time of my conversion I never ceased to feel, as well as to believe, that God was indeed my Father and the Guide of my youth. But I know that worldly ambitions and plans came into my mind, just as they do into the minds of all His children.'

To further these plans he induced his parents to send him to a school for ministers' sons, of which he had often heard. He had in his mind a scholarship, the winning of which was considered a great feat.

Of the school life of this period he writes:

'For those whose parents are on the Mission Field, or who, for any other reason, must needs be taught away from home, there could not easily be schools better in all that is most important than those which John Wesley established for his preachers' sons. The one in which I spent some years at Woodhouse Grove, near Leeds, has since been thrown open to every one, its ministers' sons pupils being transferred to the older school opened by Mr. Wesley at Kingswood, near Bristol.

'In those schools it was the great Methodist's intention that all his preachers' sons should, as far as possible, be trained to turn from the world and all its ambitions and follies, and prepare themselves to follow in their fathers' footsteps; and the Rev. John Farrar, D.D., the "Governor" in my time, kept that ideal ever before himself and us. I am not sure that his nickname of "Daddy," irreverent though it might be, was not one of the highest possible testimonials we could have given him.

'In the great "family prayer" service of each morning he did his utmost to lift us above human schools. We always sang some wonderful song, and

one of his favourites was that of which the first line runs :

What now is my object and aim ?

' Wesley firmly believed that "boys ought never to play," and was bitterly disappointed to find at Kingswood, "Yea, but they do play; yea, even at school!"

' I should have been able to assure him that he would have found no approach to the latter monstrosity in my time! The very thought of our stern-looking, energetic headmaster, Dr. Raby, would have scared away, even from the most mischievous of us, the idea of such a thing as playing in school.

' And everything had long been done that could be done to discourage anything like hearty play out of school. Almost all the playground was asphalted; only one big wall was available for wall-tennis. The one hearty game that seemed possible was strictly prohibited, and indulged in only in the foggy, early morning, when the master on duty could not easily prevent it. This was known as "mushing," and consisted in one party charging another and trying to break through somewhat as footballers do. The game had been prohibited because one boy, in a former period, had been seriously hurt. But, I fear, neither this memory nor the prohibition kept any of us out of the ranks when it was seen that the forces were gathering for the rush.

' I once got my forehead badly cut whilst playing at a game in which we threw big stones by way of bowls.

' Cricket and football on the asphalt being out of the question, we had to content ourselves with rounders, marbles, or with marching around chatting, till some of us discovered a plan of battle that consisted in hopping on one foot against each other, on the understanding that whoever was knocked on to two feet became a prisoner. At that game some of us never tired of playing till our arms were too sore to bear any more of the bumping for a while.

' We were taken regularly to bathe in the almost black waters of the River Aire; and some learnt to

swim there, limited as were the facilities. Otherwise nobody was allowed to go a step outside the school yards. It was pretty much barrack life, with no leave till holiday times came, twice a year, when we all got home.

'We were marched off to bed, after evening preparation of lessons, at 8.30 p.m., and nobody might rise before 7 a.m. in winter and 6 a.m. in summer.

'To most of us who were not the youngest this meant lying awake in the bright, early summer hours, but that time transcended all the rest in value to me, for it was spent really on the mount with God. To these hours I owe far more than to anything else in my early life all that I have ever since learnt or gained, for God became my Master in everything.'

His early morning devotions must have made a decided mark on his daily life, for during his third year a pious junior master singled him out with two others of the hundred and thirty-five scholars as 'really praying boys.' He wisely urged upon them the necessity of work for God. They should not rest content, he maintained, with their own Salvation, but ought to seek the Salvation of others. Being fully convinced of this fact, Railton was immediately brought face to face with the need of a much deeper work of grace in his own soul. Little did the young tutor dream of the mighty force he was setting in motion! Like Andrew, whose greatest world-service was to bring his brother Peter in touch with Christ, to this unknown junior master belongs the high honour of teaching Railton to seek the Salvation of others.

The boy, young as he was, had fully accepted the doctrine of Sanctification; indeed, he had recognized it clearly for himself in the Bible, and especially in the Psalms. *But the price!* There is always 'the price,' even for school-boys in their earlier teens! To him it meant separation from his chum, one of the cleverest lads in the school. This boy was a great help to Railton in all his studies, but he would hear nothing about God or prayer! As usual in such cases, Satan

suggested a half-measure. And equally, as usual, it did not work. The Commissioner says :

‘ I struggled against the loss of such a friend, and we agreed as a compromise to talk on Sundays no longer of worldly things, but to discuss the mysteries of the Book of Revelation together ! One Sunday, however, satisfied us that there was no interest there for anybody who did not wish to be found ready for the coming of the Judge of all.’

The story of his deliverance he tells himself :

‘ Meanwhile, we three boys had agreed to meet for prayer late on our half-holiday afternoon, in a room placed at our disposal. The very first Saturday a friend of mine asked to join us, and was converted. The next Saturday another did the same, and by this time the secret had begun to leak out, and several others came round the door and mocked our prayers. Quietly creeping near I noted their identity, which I was able from their voices to distinguish, and then we prayed specially for each of them.

‘ In a few weeks, more than half the school had really begun to pray, and the Class Meeting became the nursing ground of quite a band of lads, most of whom afterwards became ministers, and some of them took very high positions in the Methodist Church ; indeed, one became its President, and another one of its Missionary Secretaries.

‘ To myself, however, that period brought a never-to-be forgotten deliverance. Whilst I was meditating and praying for my own soul, God opened to me especially that promise, “ I will dwell in them, and walk in them. They shall be My people, and I will be their God.” Ah, thought I, that is just what I want. It means that God will dwell in my soul, casting out all that He dislikes, and so ruling and guiding that it shall be no longer I, but Christ dwelling in me.

‘ Instantly it seemed as if the Devil himself replied, “ What, a boy like you to aspire to all that ! It may be a possibility for some saint once in a hundred years. But for you ! The idea ! What presumption ! ”

“Well,” I said, “it is very simple to settle the question. He who gave the promise knows what He means, and that is all I care about.”

‘And I just put it to the Lord.’

“You know that I do not wish to be proud or presumptuous, but I do want all of this that I can get. If You mean it all for me, as I understand, let me have it; but if not, then let me have as much of it as I may.”

‘And it seemed to me as clear as if a Voice from Heaven had said aloud to me that night of February 13, 1863, “Yes, you shall have it all. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation.”’

‘Oh, the rapturous height of the enjoyment of those days, when I seemed to be living in Heaven and daily leading others there! Masters, seeing me absorbed in heavenly things, generally excused me when I could not properly answer questions. And when one, thinking me disrespectful, boxed my ears with some violence, it never broke my perfect peace.’

‘Of course, that extreme of rapture did not long continue, or my health or my studies must have ended. But I never lost any of that consciousness of union with God which I am sure is the eternal purpose in Christ for every one of us, and the great necessity for all who would make Him known amongst men.’

‘One practice that helped me very much, and built up, too, my liberty in writing for God, was that of my weekly letter home. It not merely kept up, as much as possible, fellowship in everything with my parents, but helped me to keep watch upon and value my life both outward and inward as nothing else could have done.’

‘After my parents’ death, for years I kept up that weekly writing either to my brother or my missionary uncle, and I strongly recommend such correspondence for the development of any young mind or soul.’

The Christmas holidays of 1864 were drawing near, and the Railton family all looking forward to a happy reunion. Launcelot was now twenty-one years of age, and to the great joy of his parents had determined to follow his father’s steps and enter the Methodist

ministry. George had passed his fifteenth birthday, and was about to leave school and take advantage of an exceptional opportunity in London under the managing director of an Anglo-Spanish firm of merchants.

Their parents, then stationed at Peel, Isle of Man, were, as usual, indefatigable in their labours of love. In a certain low part of the town fever had broken out, prostrating an entire family. Almost a panic in the neighbourhood resulted, and no one except the minister and his wife would go into the house. Between them they cared for the sufferers as well as they could, nursing every member of the family back to health, with the exception of the father.

But at last, worn out with their labours of love, the Railtons contracted the fever themselves. From the first there was little hope for their recovery, and George only reached home in time to receive their last farewell.

'Boys,' said the father, as his two sons knelt beside his deathbed, 'there is a grand work for you to do, I believe. I am going to sing the New Song.' And he peacefully and happily fell asleep in Jesus.

A few hours later his beloved Margaret followed him into the Better Land, and the brothers found themselves orphans.

How well Mr. Railton's dying prophecy has been fulfilled in the case of his younger son many of us already know; but it was none the less true in the case of the elder.

Launcelot Railton, junior, followed his father closely and rose to a position of eminence in the Methodist body. He was acknowledged to be pre-eminently a pastor, and as a soul-winner was highly honoured. His health failed in 1902, and necessitated his retirement from full circuit work, but in the years of enforced silence his saintliness was conspicuous. He constantly sought to encourage by brotherly counsel more active toilers in the field.

He died very suddenly, in 1907, when writing a letter to his son, having spent over forty years of his life in God's service.

CHAPTER III

Searching for His Ideal

'The doctrine of Holiness was very plainly taught by John Wesley and all his helpers, but it has never been generally proclaimed by their followers. . . . I had seen it all clearly enough in the Scriptures. It was perfectly plain to me that God wanted to "separate a people to Himself" who would really come out from the world, and live only to please Him.'—G. S. R.

THE life that opened out before the fifteen-year-old boy was a lonely one indeed; though looking back over forty years the Commissioner said, 'How can I doubt but that God arranged it all to preserve me the more fully to Himself, and to train me for after-service in His War?'

His position as far as temporal concerns went was extremely satisfactory. True, the old home with its comforts and joys was gone, but he had obtained the position already arranged for him, and there was every reason to suppose that, if he could throw his talents and ambition into his work, the road to wealth and worldly ease lay clear before him.

The idea of being rich never seems to have attracted him. He was willing to work for his own support because that was necessary, and he seems to have conscientiously studied the interests of his employers, since he soon became valued by them, and was raised to a confidential position. His brother introduced him to friends who were willing to show him every kindness, but he turned away from the social attractions offered, partly because he dreaded lest they might lead him from his consecration, and probably also because he found no friends congenial to him.

In order to be out of reach of well-meaning acquaintances he took a lodging close to the City, and spent his leisure time in reading the Bible and the newspapers, and in studying the Spanish required by his daily work.

His life now became entirely solitary. He writes of it in after years: 'Except in office hours I rarely spoke to any one, but sometimes used to repeat the Psalms aloud that I might hear my own voice.' And again he says:

'Alone in London! Many have been the pathetic pictures of this position sketched by the most skilled writers, and I could, from my own memory, illumined by what I know of the results of such an experience upon many, say much of its sadness, its dangers, and its consequences. Even my walks to and from the City daily were times of study, for whether I was repeating lessons of Spanish grammar, or reading the great debates in the Parliament which were then in progress, I was solitary even amidst the jostling crowds.

'My dinner-time I gave up almost entirely to those superior courts which sat at that time in the Guildhall. Carrying in my pocket enough food to keep me going, I managed to arrange my time so as to hear many of the brightest lights of the English Bar. Really, the office duties I had were so light that I was able to learn something in most of those days, and with an increased salary I felt myself abundantly provided for.'

Those were somewhat misty days spiritually. All Railton knew was that he meant to follow Christ fully. But how?

Launcelot had made him promise to join the Methodist Class Meeting, of which he had been a member. George obeyed, but somehow he was not at home there. It was a surprise to him that London Methodists were using a modification of the Prayer Book, and calling their chapels 'churches.' This seemed to him pretentious, and a departure from the creed of Methodism. He therefore resolved to attend John Wesley's old chapel. 'Surely,' he thought, 'in

spite of the words "prayer book" and "church" some of the man's spirit must cling to the walls!

But even here he appears to have been far from satisfied. His soul was full of unrest. He craved for work, and that to one end only—the saving of souls and uplifting of men, by bringing them to God.

About this time he heard of a good missionary who spent his Sundays among the Spanish sailors at the London docks. He was glad of Railton's help, and the boy was delighted to visit and talk with these sailors, but was soon distressed at the small result. To get them to listen to the Gospel or to accept a tract was counted a success. But George desired to see a real change of life in these men, and considered that anything less amounted to failure.

Looking back to this time in his life we are well able to see what then seemed so obscure to him. Ever since his early childhood he had possessed that Divine gift of spiritual vision or perception which made it impossible for him to accept anything but the highest. In his dissatisfaction with existing methods of soul-saving, he was reaching out to the same point which General Booth himself had attained some few years before.

Railton had soon to face an important crisis in his life. He had become valuable for the Spanish correspondence of his firm, and was gradually being initiated into their business methods. Before long he proved to be not always amenable. He would remonstrate against being required to write certain letters which he declared to be not perfectly straightforward and truthful. More than once it was explained to him by the head of the firm that 'These methods are unavoidable in business'; but the turning-point came when George positively refused to write an important letter to a foreign firm, declaring that it conveyed a false impression. 'Well,' said the head of the department, 'I shall report you as impossible. You might make a successful business man, but we have no use for you with such absurd scruples.'

The dismissal of Railton followed, and he appears to have been singularly untroubled by the fact that he was left without the means of supporting himself. His whole mind was engrossed by spiritual questions. His search for a perfect representation of Christian life had so far failed. He therefore decided that it was unnecessary for him to look to any Church or sect for leadership since he meant to give up his whole life to God. He became convinced that the entire system of the various Churches hindered rather than helped the carrying out of God's plans, and determined not to become a candidate for the ministry.

After much perplexity, the longing to be a missionary overpowered every other thought. His parents had both been missionaries, and he had always felt that he belonged to the mission fields. Yet the same difficulty which applied to the Churches followed him here. He feared that any Missionary Society employing him would hamper him with rules and regulations, and would expect him to study theology instead of going at once to the heathen.

The conviction that he must act independently of human direction, relying only upon the guidance of God, gained such power over him that he resolved upon a course of action appalling to his relatives and friends. His plan was to set out alone, and with only twenty pounds (still remaining from the sale of his father's library) in his pocket, to make his way to some unknown part of Africa where no missionary had yet penetrated.

The opposition of his friends to this lonely undertaking by a young man of nineteen was only natural and reasonable; but to Railton every argument as to his being 'too young' or 'too inexperienced' appeared contrary to the call of Christ.

Travelling in those days was more difficult than we now realize, and although Railton carried out his plan and started in great enthusiasm, he was to learn many lessons and see many new sides of life before he reached his native land again. Probably no one ever

heard from him a complete account of the trials of this expedition, but it must have been full of perplexing disappointment.

He found himself destitute in Morocco, but had never supposed he had enough money to carry him to his destination. 'If it is God's will to take me where I desire to go, He will provide the means,' he said in perfect confidence. And then slowly the truth dawned upon him that no miracle would be worked! The prosaic fact that his landlord wanted to be paid pressed upon him, and though he 'spent most of the days in walking the sands and pleading with God in the language of the Psalms,' he seemed to be deserted.

Meanwhile the attention of the Consul having been attracted to the young fellow, he intervened. Railton's replies to his questions were not satisfactory. He considered that a young man who said he 'was in Morocco because God sent him there' was undoubtedly mad. He therefore communicated with George's brother, and arranged for him to be sent home.

Of this return to England, he writes :

'That I should have to be sent back by the British Consul—to work my passage home as an assistant-steward; that I should then become a burden upon my brother—all this appeared to me to be trying, but was not sufficient to shake my faith in God's purpose with regard to me. Only after another three years was I to learn how that strange journey had won for me the opportunity of my life, and so had been well worth while. Certainly I would never wish any son of mine, or any young follower of Christ, to be left in equal darkness to grope a way out into life service. But I consider the case after all to be a complete demonstration that God never permits those permanently to be put to shame who place all their trust in Him.

'I had passed unscathed through dangers, both physical and moral, of which I, at that time, had no idea, and was, even in my extremity, to learn many lessons by which I am still profiting, and ever shall profit.'

On his arrival in London, Railton found it easier to throw up a good position than to obtain another, and he says :

‘ What was I to do? In London again, alone and unemployed, I drank to the very dregs the cup of dependence, need, and helplessness. I could not bear to remain a burden to my brother, so after weeks of hopeless search for employment, hearing that there was work to be got in Cornish mines, and counting upon a sympathetic reception there, I started upon the tramp for that distant goal one rainy afternoon.

‘ Reserving every possible penny for lodgings, and gradually losing strength as I tramped along, I remember reaching the climax of distress at Bridport.

‘ Surely, it was of God that the tide was out when I sank down, utterly exhausted, by its wharf, with every penny gone, and no idea how to get any farther. The Devil had no hard task that day to persuade me that when God allowed any of His servants to be so hard pushed that only death seemed before them, there could be no wrong in choosing the precise form of death! That it could be right to beg I had never yet thought.

‘ But hope revived. I remembered I still had a pawnable overcoat, and the proceeds of it carried me on the remainder of my journey, till in extreme exhaustion I reached a lead-mining village not far from Exeter. Here I gladly learned that manual work could be got.

‘ And how can I now regret any of the steps that led me to the personal knowledge of all that the unemployed pass through? In that mining village I had time enough to learn how much true brotherly love can be shown to a praying tramp, how much patience with his incapacity, how much readiness to help him in every way, before I received the helpful letter and cheque which a relative had sent after me as soon as he knew of my position.

‘ I was at once to buy new clothing and come to him, so that I might again be set going in the world

of commerce and offices. I gladly accepted his kindness, and was able, I think, to render service that made him at any rate content to have given me a fresh start in life!'

No sooner had he grasped his new work in the West of England than Railton began to cast about for something to do for the Lord. This was not difficult to find, and he considers that he had all the opportunities that a lad of twenty could well desire for labouring publicly as well as privately for his Saviour. His Sundays were well filled. He averaged fourteen miles walking, and had always two and often three Services.

A year later he accepted a post with an uncle at Stockton-on-Tees, and this led him into still wider fields of influence and spiritual service. He was a good man of business, and fully satisfied his employers, for to him 'not slothful in business' was as much a Divine command as 'pray without ceasing.'

At the end of six months, therefore, he was transferred to more important work at Middlesbrough, and here he preached his trial sermon and passed his 'examination' as a fully accredited local preacher. Would that some one present could have given us information about that sermon, which had for its basis the unusual text from Third Epistle of John, verse 10: 'If I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words.' He remembered very little about it himself. He only knew that he had to be very careful not to fall into the snare of trying to please men, even with the pure motive of gaining a wider field of influence. He also remembered that he made a declaration of war upon modern as against old-fashioned Methodism, and that there was no firstly, secondly, or thirdly, nor any introduction about it; all was experience and application.

As the audience largely consisted of officials or members of the society the address must have been illuminating to them! That it was delivered in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and was free from youthful

conceit or criticism, is proved by its reception. Railton was unanimously 'passed,' and the only comment he ever heard was that 'from the oldest to the youngest present he had given them something they would not soon forget!'

From this time on he was again regarded by everybody as a candidate for the ministry. He says:

'I was fully enjoying my enlarged opportunities of getting to know men. Middlesbrough at that time was "booming" forward. My uncle's business extended to four towns and demanded often the dispatch of parties of workmen to more distant ones also. We had as many as one hundred and twenty men. The whole secretarial and accountant's work of the business, collecting of accounts, payment of those who drew their wages at Middlesbrough, drawing up estimates, and carrying on of correspondence, was my task. I never heard of a complaint either as to my way of doing it, or as to my manner in dealing with any one, high or low, during the time of extremest pressure, although we were so closely run financially that the men could not always get their full pay at the pay hour.'

He made the most of every opportunity, using his spare time for God, and of these days one of his then young comrades writes:

'There was plenty of work to be done in Middlesbrough of a pioneering nature, so it was the right place for Mr. Railton; for a time, anyway.

'Our Mission was also a good training ground; it helped to prepare him for his future world-wide career. We made him Secretary of our Mission Band Committee. Our work was largely in the open-air, in parts of the town where there were no places of worship. On Sundays we had the use of a butcher's shop. The butcher was a kind Methodist, and every Saturday night he cleared the shop for us with the exception of the block which did duty for a pulpit!

'Mr. Railton was a good preacher, well educated, with a fine voice, and an attractive style. He was also

courageous and pushing, and loved to address a crowd on the street. He went into his work with all his heart and soul.'

Here he toiled until the following brief but significant entry was made in the still-existing Minute Book of the Mission: 'Mr. Railton has removed to a wider sphere of duty.' How wide this sphere would prove was wholly undreamt of both by the young man himself and his fellow-workers.

CHAPTER IV

His Ideal Found

'I had found at last (1872) comrades with whom I could march with all my heart, and without fear of their requiring me in any way to lag behind the Master or in anything betray His cause.'—G. S. R.

EVER since the Morocco 'episode' Launcelot Railton had felt great anxiety respecting his young brother which the latter's candidature for the ministry did not allay, since George showed no disposition to submit to any existing order that would not give him a free hand and perfect liberty to obey what he might feel to be 'the call of God' at the moment.

It is a pity that no portrait of him at this time exists; but he is described as the embodiment of health, energy, life, and 'go.' Each of his quick gestures and every flash of his keen, dark eyes proclaimed that fact. Yet his energy was pent up; always vainly seeking some outlet. His mighty dynamic force must unquestionably either find a safe channel or break all bounds and become an engine of destruction instead of a power for good. No wonder that his friends were ever questioning, 'What will become of him?' 'What crazy idea will possess him next?'

The description of him by Commissioner Booth-Tucker, in the 'Life of Catherine Booth,' likens him to a 'latter-day George Fox,' and continues:

'Left to himself, however, his genius would probably have been rather of the destructive than constructive type. A radical of radicals, and an extremist of the most pronounced stamp, he was for exposing, tearing down, and

demolishing every form of religious sham and humbug that he encountered. He would have burnt the field of wheat rather than tolerate the chance existence of a tare. He hated ecclesiasticism with all the strength of his strong nature. "Fix it as your pole-star," he would say, "and then sail with all your might in the opposite direction."

Perhaps it was his anxiety about George, added to overwork, that helped to reduce Launcelot Railton to a state of nervous prostration early in the seventies, and sent him off eventually to a hydropathic establishment at Matlock to recuperate. This establishment seemed to be a resort for over-worked Methodist ministers at that time, since in due course he was joined by another in the same state of exhausted brain and nerve, the Rev. William Booth, of the Methodist New Connexion.* A warm friendship sprang up between the two. Mr. Booth was a man several years older than Mr. Railton, and had just completed five strenuous years of soul-saving work.

The story of the struggles that led up to 'The Christian Revival Association,'† was intensely fascinating to Launcelot, and a certain something about the daring, intrepid spirit of its originator reminded him not only of the consecrated lives of his parents, but also of George.

'I have a brother,' he remarked one day, 'who I think would just suit you. I must tell him about you.' Then he went on to relate the story of the attempted African Mission. Mr. Booth was interested and amused, and the two men soon after parted and became immersed in their separate work—for the time probably forgetting all about their conversation. But they were to be reminded of it again at no very late date.

Shortly after his return to work, Mr. Booth published a small sixpenny booklet called 'How to Reach the Masses with the Gospel.' This gave a brief account of his Mission, but was also intended to show how inadequate the existing Church and religious methods

* Now known as the 'United Methodist Church.'

† Which soon after developed into the Christian Mission.

of that day were to reach the thousands who never entered a place of worship. The book attracted little notice, and its first edition of five thousand was with difficulty pushed into circulation, barely meeting its cost. Nevertheless, it was destined to have a world-wide influence.

One day, right in the middle of Railton's perplexities and restless dissatisfaction, came an advertisement of this little book. He wrote off at once for the pamphlet, as well as for the various religious magazines that explained the Movement, and devoured them with all the intensity of a hungry soul. It was characteristic of him to study carefully what well-known Christians and Christian workers of various denominations had to say about the Movement, thoroughly captivated as he was at the outset by Mr. Booth's book.

People often called him impulsive and hot-headed, but this showed how little they knew him! He moved slowly to begin with, never deceived by first appearances; but when once convinced that a certain course was right, the radical in him asserted itself, and he threw himself into it heart and soul.

When as fully convinced as possible that the Christian Mission was all it seemed to be, Railton, without consulting any one, sat down and offered himself to its Leader.

Mr. Booth made it a rule to accept no one without a personal interview, nor without giving them a chance to study the Mission and its work. And while he had already heard of George Scott Railton, and was much prepossessed in his favour, he determined to adhere to his custom. He replied, therefore, as follows:

‘ October 20, 1872.

‘ MY DEAR BROTHER,—Yours to hand. I read it with interest. Both Mrs. Booth and I feel very anxious that you should be led aright.

‘ Greatly as I need help, and strongly as I am impressed with the idea that you should be greatly blessed in this Mission and very helpful to me in every way, I would not

have you come on any account if it did not appear to be equally the way for you.

‘I won’t write any more about the work. You will be better able to form a correct estimate by looking at it. I am sorry you cannot come earlier than the date you name: first, because I confess to a strong desire to see you at once; and secondly, because it may prevent the early completion of those arrangements which you say it will be necessary to make before you could comfortably leave your present situation.

‘I write in great haste. Write me a line as soon as you can, definitely fixing a date. We shall be glad to entertain you under our roof.

‘Yours in the Gospel,

‘WILLIAM BOOTH.’

This letter was answered by a post card which showed that the Candidate appeared to have no doubt as to his ultimate acceptance by the Christian Mission.

‘October 24, 1872.

‘DEAR SIR,—The more I reflect the more I see the impossibility of my judging much of your work in a few days, even if I wanted any further satisfaction than I feel. As to what is best for me, it is to do God’s will. If you think you could satisfy yourself about me in two or three days of next week, I will make every effort to get away Monday or Tuesday.

‘I have only a few minutes to write in since getting yours, but it needs no deliberation for me to do what I have been determined for years on doing, in any way and at any time or place God might choose.

‘R.’

The visit was duly paid, and the few days lengthened into weeks, so entranced was the young man with all that he saw and heard.

Some one has truly said that ‘Salvationists are born not made.’ and, therefore, Railton found himself instantly in his own element. On the one hand the Christian Mission and its Leaders led him down to the very people he had for so long hungered to reach. He was certainly appalled at their condition. ‘Nothing

that I have ever seen, or can see in any heathen land,' he wrote in later years, 'can ever lessen the sense of horror with which I look back upon all the scenes I witnessed in Shoreditch on Sundays.'

But, on the other hand, his whole being responded to the marvellous opportunity unfolded before him. To find the most abandoned specimens of humanity turning to the Saviour of the world, was Heaven on earth to young Railton.

Best of all, to his mind, was the way the new Converts were used and encouraged to give their testimonies and pray in all the Meetings, as well as to work and witness in home and workshop. Rough, untutored, and uneducated they were, for the most part, but mighty powers for good when inspired by the Holy Spirit. 'Happy Elizas' and once 'Drinking Billies' attracted scores of unhappy Elizas and other drinking Billies and Toms and Jacks as no white-necktied preacher ever could.

General Bramwell Booth tells us that the way Railton revelled in the Open-Air fighting—then in its early stages, and not so rowdy as it afterwards became—and his enthusiasm about everything he saw of the work, were delightful to behold. The first address he gave was powerful. It made a deep impression, not so much as indicating the great ability he subsequently developed, as showing the directness of his attack on sin and his surprising knowledge of how to come to close grips with the conscience of the sinner.

Of these early days Railton further writes in after years :

'I had been specially pleased to find the Mission under the leadership of one man, and that a man yet in the vigour of his days instead of the venerable being I had imagined. A couple full of desire for all that was most heavenly, and yet talking about everything in the language of the street and the shop, seemed to me ideal Leaders for an entirely spiritual work.'

It was all so glorious and wonderful that Railton could hardly tear himself away ; but duty recalled him,

for he was unable honourably to give up his position in Middlesbrough until March, 1873.

Meanwhile Launcelot Railton objected to what he considered his young brother's 'sudden decision,' and pleaded with him to take time and to consult his friends upon the matter. George, on his part, could not understand his brother's surprise. He writes :

'Your attitude makes it seem the more hopeless for me ever to enter any new sphere with the concurrence and entire satisfaction of those I love most. . . . Ever since 1868 I have been declaring my views of the system of trading, and have declared myself bound in duty and honour to enter the first door God should open to me. Surely, there has been time for advice and consultation?

'Yet I am considered to have acted suddenly and inconsiderately and without consultation in entering the first opening I have ever seen. In this case there is no question, because Mr. Booth and I are so much one that I cannot separate myself from him and his work. He, too, says that when I left him after my visit both he and Mrs. Booth felt they had lost one who had suddenly become a pleasure and power to them. I hope the grand man is making no mistake, but if he is putting me in the wrong niche, I do believe I am so one with his work that I will be gladly shifted to any other.

'Mr. Booth cannot require of me too many duties, for I wish to do whatever he will let me do. Whether I am fit for the post, or it for me, how can anybody know until I try! If I am *not* fit for it, I think there is more room for me in the Mission than anywhere else to do just what I can; and what more can there be said than that?'

But to the elder brother and the missionary uncle the tiny Christian Mission seemed a poor exchange for the world-renowned Wesleyan Methodist Ministry; nor was Mr. Booth at all surprised that they should so consider it. He writes to George :

'I am quite satisfied as regards your brother's consistency. I am not surprised that he should feel as he does when it comes to leaving what he considers the old ship, and almost the only good one! Well, we shall see. We cannot correctly predict the future. If a man goes out of

the beaten path of usefulness, he cannot directly describe every turn and twist in the new; but with God as our Hope and Guide, we need not be nervous. Worse things have been done by the "safe" people than the interior of Africa expedition. What may have been destructive to your expectations with some people, made you one with me! But then you see I am "odd."

'Well, let us cast ourselves on God,

'Affectionately,

'WILLIAM BOOTH.'

One immediate result of Railton's brief visit to London was the beginning of his career as a writer. The 'Christian Mission Magazine' was already in being, and he was invited to contribute to its pages.

He wrote his first article for the November issue in the train upon his return journey to Middlesbrough, and as he says himself, 'I continued to write all I could from that time, finding it even a greater enjoyment to write for Christ than to speak for Him.'

This visit also marked the date of the beginning of a lifelong friendship with Mr. Booth and his family. 'General' was a term of affection used for his chosen Leader by Railton even before he had actually become a member of the Mission. Nor was this a mere passing phase of hero-worship on the part of a young man for an attractive older one. From the very first they understood each other, as this scrap from Mr. Booth, written in the January of 1873, shows:

'I am rather sorry you should have taken my stupid writing of the word "fragment" for "payment." But you really did not for a moment think or could imagine my talking about *payment* would influence you! No, you took it for a joke! I must try and write more legibly. I fear though, it is too late, and won't be possible until I have less to do.'

Something of the eager joy with which Railton looked forward to his life-work we gather from the

following, written a couple of months before leaving Middlesbrough :

‘MY DEAR GENERAL,—Please tell me the new office address, as I think of sending up a box there, to leave me with nothing but what I can carry myself, and so facilitate a rush of the “Dick Turpin” description when the happy hour comes.

‘As I do not anticipate any evening at home I think it best for me to keep my box at the office, and arrange to have dinner and tea somewhere near. . . .

‘Everything I read about you and our people reawakens and refreshes my love for you all, but I must confess to being in a most disagreeable state just now, which I can only describe as “run down.” Even preaching does not seem to revive me; I seem “spilt”-like. I think a week of out-door Services would put me straight, but I can’t get them here now.

‘Breathing gassy air, and writing till late every night doesn’t work, but then I keep singing, “There’s a brighter day coming on,” etc. It is all nothing: I shall arrive at the right moment—and all is well for ever!

‘Your ever-to-be faithful Lieutenant,

‘G. S. R.’

CHAPTER V

The Secretary

'When Jesus spoke of "ministers," He meant men who really served others spiritually—fed them with heavenly food. . . . He Himself "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," not to have a nice study and pulpit prepared for Him, but to study in the wilderness, the carpenter's shop, the fishing-boat, and the jostling crowd, and to use for a pulpit every spot He could stand or sit upon amongst men—always amongst them.'—G. S. R.

ONE March afternoon George Scott Railton, then in his twenty-fourth year, arrived in London to take up his position as Secretary to the Rev. William Booth, Founder and Superintendent of the Christian Mission. He went, as invited, straight to the Booths, with whom he remained as 'one of the family' for eleven years.

He found himself completely at home at first. That subtle indefinable spirit that sometimes draws together and makes kin those of different bloods, closed lovingly round the young man to whom the word 'home' had for so long been represented by a lonely lodging.

General Bramwell Booth says reflectively :

'Railton on his arrival made a great impression on us all. The worst seven years of struggle, fighting, and poverty were, of course, over before he came. But he fell into our life of hustle and commotion, and we were all hard workers together. He encouraged us in our public work, and did all he could to help us forward in every way.'

Whether he was considered as much of an addition

to the evangelists of Mr. Booth's Mission, is quite another matter. That he was 'queer' and decidedly 'eccentric' they agreed, and shook their heads dubiously over a youth who believed in 'praying till your knees were petrified' and 'preaching until you were too hoarse to make yourself heard!' 'Sleep and food,' we are told, were to him 'necessary evils.' His rule was, or would have been if permitted, 'eat when nobody will stop to listen, and sleep when you can't keep yourself awake!' He appeared to be as strong as a young ox; he could sleep anywhere and eat anything, and endure hardness that would seriously have damaged the average constitution.

In spite of his overflowing vitality, however, he was even then remarkable for that strain of sympathetic gentleness and almost tenderness to all weaker and less stable than himself, which so characterized him in later years.

Mr. Booth's eldest son, the present General, then a delicate lad with a weak heart and a spine that gave grave cause for anxiety, speaks lovingly of the young man's care of him when they were little more than lads together:

'He and I became great friends—a friendship that lasted for forty years! In those days we constantly worked, travelled, and slept together. His kindness and generosity to me were wonderful. He could sleep anywhere. I anything but anywhere! The table top in the waiting-room was good enough for him, but I had to have the cushions, if there were any! Often when travelling by night by train there would be one of us on each seat, and George Railton on the floor between—sleeping as soundly as in a bed!'

Probably he had never had a backache at this period of his development, or reason to locate the position of his heart, but somehow or other he understood, and not only understood but sympathized, and as far as he was able, did his best to relieve suffering and weakness of every kind.

Another trait he possessed, and which at twenty-

three was highly developed, was a great dislike of making trouble for anybody. The average very young man goes on his self-centred, buoyant, whistling way, oblivious of the fact that the other half of the household is asleep, busy, or engaged in one of a dozen duties necessitating peace and quiet! But Railton would, and often did, sleep on a door-mat, or creep through a cellar window rather than disturb a sleeping household.

Mrs. Booth used to tell of how they found him one morning fast asleep on the top of the scullery copper! He had been out late to a Meeting the night before, and the family had gone to bed, supposing that he had his own door-key. He, finding himself locked out, was so unwilling to take the chance of disturbing the household that he crept in through a back window or coal-hole and curled up on the best substitute for a bed he could find!

Had Mrs. Booth not added him to her other multitudinous family cares he would have fared ill. She kept her motherly eyes open to his needs, and when repeated promises to go to the tailor and get a new suit had been broken or postponed to the more convenient time that never came, she gave the order herself. When the new clothes arrived she had them put in the place of the old, which she wisely removed from his room while he was asleep, thus putting out of the way the temptation to 'make them do a little longer.'

Young Railton in those days was often a surprise to his new friends. Just when they had made up their minds about him, he was apt to show some totally unexpected side to his character. As, for instance, when a chum, surprised to find him kneeling by the cradle of a young baby, kissing its cheek and making its pink fingers twine round his big, brown ones, cried out, 'Hullo, I didn't think that sort of thing at all in your line!'

But all children loved him, and none were ever known to be afraid of him. The younger members

of the Booth family found in him a rare playfellow as well as a big brother. It was this gentle, simple, loving spirit that made him beloved of all that knew him, beloved even by those most prone to disagree with him!

In those days the Headquarters' Staff of the Christian Mission was a very small concern. In addition to Mr. Booth and his young sons, there were only Railton, a paid clerk, and an office boy. The work had begun to spread into the provinces, and every fresh opening added to the new Secretary's duties, particularly as Mr. and Mrs. Booth were much away on evangelistic tours. From the very first his was a responsible position.

As Secretary to the Leader he was admitted to Councils and Conferences and given a voice in all matters under discussion. He was at once recognized as a very valuable addition in spite of his inexperience, and as time went on exercised a more and more weighty influence.

A handful of odd letters before us show that he was not only a wise and diplomatic Secretary but a sympathetic one as well. This to a would-be evangelist could leave no doubt in the mind of the recipient as to the sort of people he was joining:

'It seems most necessary to point out the great difficulty that stands in the way of our accepting you; it is that we cannot offer you anything like the income you seem now to enjoy.

'Even our regular salary we do not usually offer to Candidates till they have proved that they can get the amount from their congregations and societies, our aim being to make the Mission entirely self-supporting as soon as possible. Are you and your wife fully prepared for a reduced income?'

This attempt to soothe hurt feelings and bind up the broken-hearted, as well as delicately to get in a word of warning, is worthy of an older head:

'We all love you, and cannot bear to have any needless pain inflicted upon you. . . . I do hope nothing will

ever be allowed to transpire amongst the members in your town; it would be a great shame for you or any one that loves you to be troubled by any talk.

'And, moreover, let me add that I hope when the grief thus unintentionally inflicted upon you has passed, you will cease to have the slightest thought of anything like bitterness towards you on the part of Brother —. He never said a word to me which savoured of any other spirit than love.

'I find it most important (sometimes almost in spite of facts) to believe in people's love for me, for my own peace sake.'

This is to a fiery but presumably over-zealous apostle:

'I am sorry you are having so much trouble with the police, though I really do not think we can reasonably expect to be allowed to occupy *whole* streets, as they tell me your folks do!

'If you can come to any workable agreement with the police, with or without the magistrates, it would make it much more agreeable and secure, because the magistrates are so much under their influence that they can get them to believe almost anything against you if they like.'

The following is well calculated to preserve that 'bond of unity' so necessary among those working for the same cause:

'I have very little hope of getting to see you or any of our country stations, for Mr. Booth is only very poorly, and Mr. Bramwell being away, and likely to be for some time, I am tied to the desk.

'The new stations, of course, all help to add to the writing work to be done here. But the work is glorious! The opening of Rotherham, South Shields, Spennymoor, Bishop Auckland, and Dowlais are all very pleasing and promise well.

'— was summoned for Open-Air work and appears to-morrow. She had twenty souls* last Sunday night, and some rough men, too.

* The Salvation Army method of stating that twenty people professed conversion to Christ.

'Rachel Agar had twenty-two souls at Felling last Monday night. They have a night of prayer to-night here.

'Brother Pratt and his lot have got fined 1s. and costs (£7 in all) at West Hartlepool, but they sang from the court to the theatre, and then formed up and sang through the town!

'Mr. Booth had forty souls on Sunday at Sheffield; Mrs. Booth had twenty-two at Limehouse; Brother Blandy had twenty at Sunderland; Miss Davis twenty at Stockton. They had eleven at Whitechapel, and twelve at Leicester,

'Whitechapel had a good day, with fifteen souls at the finish. Bethnal Green seems quite to have turned the corner of difficulties!

'Cardiff, though forced to use the week-night Hall, had evidently a glorious red-hot time. This is what we want—the people to go in for God and souls with all their might! It is most delightful to hear of congregations and societies of downright roughs. Of course, such people will keep away the respectable, and won't be able to contribute so much money; but if they are seized, held, and filled with Divine Power, they will make such a force as no other could!

'We had an extremely good time here at our weekly Prayer Meeting, when we did not forget you, nor shall we do so at our All-Night of Prayer at Poplar to-morrow.

'I am afraid I am writing too fast, and it will bother you to read it; but it is 10 p.m., and I have still other letters to write. My love to your wife and family.'

If the stations increased rapidly, the Headquarters' Staff remained woefully insufficient, and as late as 1877-8 the clerk and the office-boy with Mr. Railton were practically the only 'stand-bys,' the others being all engaged further afield. Evenings and Sundays were gala times for the Secretary, when he could with a free mind gratify his soul-saving instinct.

But all work connected with the Mission was sacred to him, and everything, even the most tedious of details, bore the superscription, 'Holiness unto the Lord.' His office work was just as whole-heartedly and thoroughly done, and in the same spirit of devotion and prayer, as his Meetings.

A young man who had come to render some assistance in the office was struck with this. To him an office was an office, and spiritual work was spiritual work; a big gulf separated the two. On one occasion the office boy was saucy; whereupon the new-comer promptly hit him over the head with a ruler. To his surprise all work ceased while the Secretary gently pointed out to him that two wrongs never yet made one right, and furthermore, that there was a wonderful Power which could not only control but entirely remove ill temper and passion. He quoted the text, 'A bishop must be . . . no striker,' explaining that the New Testament idea of a bishop was a 'servant of all.' This was an entirely new text to the young man, and he never forgot its lesson. Later on he was wonderfully used of God as a Holiness teacher.

These were good years for Railton. Before very many weeks had passed he recognized that his spiritual wanderings were over and he had found his anchorage.

The following letter to Mrs. Booth, in 1873, shows how much he appreciated the treasures of home and friends:

'I have been very sorry to hear that your throat has given way, but I must confess that my first instinctive feeling when the bad news came was one of hope that you would come home just a little bit. Your absence has begun to be a real affliction to me; but while we continue to receive such glorious news from Portsmouth, I suppose I must be glad to forgo further opportunities of making your acquaintance.

'I can hardly tell you how precious Willie (General Bramwell Booth) has become to me. For the first time in my life I am blessed with a companion-friend who can greatly help me mentally and morally without making me feel an inferiority such as to embarrass sympathy. We have a great affinity of disposition, and enjoy each other's society, in spite of my un-communicativeness. I wish you could make him understand before he comes back that I *very much value* his opinion upon any subject, and that he need never be afraid of criticizing or teaching me; but that I

do gain and expect to gain by his suggestions. It is so contrary to both our inclinations to say this kind of thing, that it would not be easy for me to express it to him personally. . . .

'I was not exaggerating in the least when I spoke of my introduction to the Mission as an entry into a new world. After mentally scorning and satirizing for years every suggestion made to me by people around me—because I didn't believe either in them or their theories—you may guess the delight of finding myself glad to learn from everybody. Nobody has any idea to how great an extent this is my mood just now—because I am silent.'

The terms of intimacy and confidence which existed between Railton and The Army Mother are shown by the following extracts from correspondence of those early days. Writing to her to Stockton, in March, 1875, he comments on her 'motherly remarks about my never stopping' and her concern for his health. He also says:

'I quite feel with you about my cognomen with yourself and the family. At Stockton I was always "George'd" by people who were not relatives, nor my own mental and spiritual flesh and blood, as I feel all the Booths to be. I would gladly cease to be "Mr. Railton" to the family.'

Well was it for the young man that he was able in these early years to turn to Mrs. Booth for help and guidance. At a time when he was earnestly seeking light on the great question of prayer it became his duty to visit a Mission evangelist. He describes this man as 'one of the holiest men of prayer we have ever had to do with; shining all over with the light of Heaven.' At first Railton was filled with admiration of this man. After a closer study, however, his practical common sense and hard-headed reasoning led him to the following conclusion which he writes to Mrs. Booth:

'It is all delightfully grand, but I would not exchange with him on any account. True, he is my junior, and may grow into much that is now wanting, but I question whether he ever will except by human leading.

'He comes into a huge town, and talks much to God and man about a huge work. He hears about the Circus* Services, and knows the Circus is there—not more than ten minutes' walk away; *but he never knows any part of the way to it till I take him.*

'He comes to a troubled, dissatisfied society, and agonizes with God (and with man in public) that all the members may be sanctified and united; but *he does not know* members near the top of the list whose addresses are fully entered, but who have kept away and need hunting up. I point out the ease with which these people can be got at, but for my own peace sake I dare not ask if he has visited *anybody*. Yet he has been here nearly three months.

'Now, this is my point. I thoroughly believe this is a fully sanctified man. I feel certain that he has the closest fellowship with God, and really spends hours daily in converse with Him. But God has never in all this intercourse convinced him that he should do the simplest acts which the needs of the Work demand.

'How is it? I can only conclude that God acts towards him upon precisely the same system that I do. Having not the slightest hope of leading him by *talk*, by anything but, so to speak, personal guiding by hand, and by training to do what he should, I will not grieve and weaken him by finding fault, but try lovingly to stimulate and encourage him, in the hope that he may grow stronger and better. I certainly *seemed* to set his heart on the Circus, and I got two new Open-Air Services put on. But I am going away again.

'How is it that God does not show *him* what He shows *me*, or make *him* feel as He makes *me* feel?'

Discussing the faith of this evangelist, and of others of his school, he goes on:

'The faith of these people, familiar as they are with God, seems to me to be only the faith of a baby—charming, demonstrative, fleeting; the faith that claps its hands and crows when mother presents a lump of sugar at nine inches distance, but screams the moment she draws it a foot or two back. It is not the faith of a *man*, settled,

* Hired for evangelistic services.

calm, desperate, unmovable, which confides to the end in a love ever so diligently concealed and opposed, and *wins*. I will go on trusting in God. He will do in me and by me all He can, and without any pressing; He knows I expect it.'

Years later in his *Life of Lieut.-Colonel Junker*, of Germany, the Commissioner outlines The Salvation Army's position with respect to prayer, showing that the conclusions reached so long ago were borne out by his riper experience:

'The Army never teaches the long dreary sort of praying that has, alas! too often been described in a way calculated to check any inclination in that direction amongst those who do not pray themselves. We do not believe in that foggy condition of mind and heart which demands hours of prayer daily in order to find out whether you really are pleasing God, and whether He really will help you.

'We believe in the clear, simple, matter-of-fact sort of praying taught us in the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer—the outcry of a warrior in the midst of battle, who must get help in answer to a few ringing words, or get none at all—the praying without ceasing that can, above the surrounding din of the factory or the battle-field, make itself heard in Heaven, just as well as from amidst the cushions of the parlour or the quiet seclusion of church or sick-room. God delights to hear the cry of those importunate souls that can get no help but from Him, and that will not be denied.'

Those who knew the Commissioner best, know also that he was a man of prayer after this fashion.

The following year, while endeavouring to cheer and comfort Mrs. Booth in a season of special conflict and depression, he gives us unconsciously the key-stone on which the whole superstructure of his life was built. It was from this settled conviction as to the government of what he called at that time 'D.P.' (Divine Providence) that he gained that changelessness in which so many of his comrades found rest.

He might be compared to the ocean, with its sur-

face restless and constantly agitated by passing storms, but obedient in its entirety to that power by which its unvarying tides are governed and controlled. What the moon is to the sea, the will of God, even in these early days, was to George Scott Railton.

'Won't you give the Lord a minute?' he wrote. 'He can no more do everything at once than anybody else. His government is competent, and demands and expects entire confidence as such. It is undoubtedly true that if "the soul is really given up to God, all its dispositions and feelings will harmonize" with that fact; but they won't harmonize all in a minute. He must reign *until* He hath put everything right.

'The rule with His people is that they vote His government in, and then the first disturbance or breakdown that occurs they up and vote want of confidence, and the great government instantly falls, and there is a season of utter confusion. At last in despair they vote for the restoration, only to repeat the old revolution the first time they find anything not harmonizing with God: thus He has no chance.

'He found you feeble and shrinking; He raised you till you have made efforts so daring that people say, "What a nerve she must have!" little knowing how the excellency of the power is of God. Then He crushes you beneath a heavier weight of, shall I say, taxation than He ever has before, developing your resources to meet it. In the midst of this there is commotion, rising even at times to riot, yet never upsetting the government.

'You are "distressed" because the new impositions are not accepted with quietness and even with acclamations; but I do not believe God is in the least surprised. He does not care for putty people. He enjoys stirring up His children like an eagle does her young, and seeing them flap and scream and tumble into greater confidence and strength than they had before. The process of riot and suppression by the military is absolutely necessary to establish liberty and order firmly for ever.

'Did God, after all, give the "Wake up, Lord" psalms only for a handful of Jews? Do they not as much belong to us of this new generation? Will you read some of them if you feel discouraged or distressed on Monday,

and see if, after all, there is not a soul in them that is feeling exactly like your own, and expressing itself a deal better than I can? And those people got a peace and righteousness and joy about which there was nothing false, and which grew. Panting and struggling they yet trusted in Him, and were not confounded. 'There were fewer theologians to confound them, I admit!'

And again, on the same topic about the same time, to General Bramwell Booth:

'I can so thoroughly sympathize with your feelings about worry, though I am so free myself. I shall never forget the sad looks and words of my dear father when his nervous condition was, I daresay, very like yours. As he left the chapel one Sunday morning he said to some one: "They tell me it is want of faith in God, but they do not know what it is to be nervous." . . .

'No one can possibly be more extreme than I am in demanding "the Kingdom of God," absolute, unqualified submission, not to a *system of living* which seems to harmonize with Scripture, but to the Creator personally, who is *always faithful* to His designs and declarations. And for that very reason I insist upon confidence in Him, once that management is fully accepted, which deprives us at once and for ever of a responsibility which can only be ours while we are independent, to some extent, of the supreme government.'

This unbroken confidence in God made him see triumph in places where others only saw defeat. He writes of a tiny centre:

'The sight of this broken-down concern, which has always been described to me as so poor an affair, has refreshed me immensely. Small comparatively, and neglected by the two poor little things we sent, it is still something worthy of God and the angels, with unspeakable possibilities. Cadets? Oh, yes, there are many in infancy here, if we only learn to pass by the people of ability, and take the humble, unpretentious, godly ones and press them to the front!'. . .

'How I dread all the revelations that are coming upon

me. But never mind, the worse they are the better things God has determined, and all will be well.'

Nothing ever upset Railton : bad news and sudden breakdowns seemed to stimulate instead of depressing him. Opposition and slander only made him the more sure they were on the right lines. He was a wonderful cheer and inspiration all round.

Mr. Booth, writing to his wife the year after the new Secretary had come to them, and during a time of special trial, says : ' You must not be discouraged—get your will to help your faith. . . . A little bit of Railton mixed with our anxious temperament would do us a world of good ! '

CHAPTER VI

The Evangelist

'We only desire to form and to keep up outside every denominational circle a body as large as we can of free-shooters for the express purpose of assaulting with spiritual weapons those who, like ourselves, are without the Church, but who, unlike us, are still in rebellion against God.'—G. S. R., in *Heathen England*.

IN 1876 Railton, in addition to his other duties, was given charge of the Poplar Station, where difficulties had arisen in connexion with the new developments of the Mission. His delight at this appointment was unbounded; but as a Corps Officer—that is, an Officer engaged in the ordinary religious work of The Army in one centre—he cannot be said to have been wholly a success. 'He was such a fire-brand,' says General Bramwell Booth, 'and went at such a pace, no one could keep up with him. His standard was too exacting.' Railton writes:

'I was appointed to Poplar with a married man, fresh from a North Country blasting furnace, to help me. Before we arrived it was found that the domineering party had all left and had taken a room for Meetings, leaving us with a very small number of hearers in our own Hall. My colleague, however, had a daughter of sixteen, and the three of us used to be seen night after night as the clock struck seven beginning our Open-Air Meeting.

'Even those who remained with us were by no means as helpful as we could have wished, being rather inclined to long and unattractive speaking, and ready to resent my immediately announced intention to use my colleague's daughter or any other sister, however young, who was

willing to speak in public! But we persevered and very soon began to raise an eager force of young Converts.'

But 'eager forces' of anything are not raised without hard work, and every night the small company was followed to the Hall by a band of howling, hooting roughs. Railton was often 'just one big bruise all over, and badly cut with stones.' Once at Wapping a stone injured his eye, but, covered with mud and blood as he was, he led the Meetings. This state of things continued for months, and the windows of the Hall were broken continually. But the conversions were marvellous. And as long as there were conversions, what did bruises or cuts or anything else matter?

General Bramwell Booth, who shared so much of his life in those days, says:

'He was wonderful at those week-night Meetings, at the Limehouse Gaff, at Poplar, and Barking. The rows! The fights over a sinner's soul with twelve for a congregation! He loved the people. I have seen him stop and talk to a man till he shrivelled up; I have seen him rolled in snow, mud, and garbage, yet never utter an angry word.

'One of my earliest recollections of him is of taking him, nearly forty years ago, to visit a dying woman in Brick Lane, Whitechapel. Leaving her we encountered a man on the stairs. Railton instantly stopped him with the question, "Are you saved?" "No. That's my mother you have been to see," was the reply.

'Thereupon Railton seized the man's hand, dropped on his knees, and began to pray for his soul, kneeling on the stairs just below the man, and I above him. The mother's door stood open, and the dying woman joined her prayers with ours, until Railton led her son to her bedside—a saved man.'

Lieut.-Colonel Roberts, his helper at Poplar, writes:

'He was a lion in strength and energy. I have often known him work all day Sunday from 6 a.m. till 11 p.m. Then, because he had to be early in the office, and would not ride on public conveyances on Sundays, he used to walk a few miles till twelve o'clock, find the nearest railway station, and wait there until the first train came along to take him to his office, where he began work immediately.'

In those days Railton was often known to do without regular sleep for more than a week, when 'All-Night' Meetings or journeys filled the nights and office work the days. Happy indeed it was for him that a 'cap-nap' of ten or fifteen minutes refreshed and renewed him as two or three hours would the ordinary individual! 'When I go to bed,' he often said, 'I go to sleep,' with heavy emphasis on the 'sleep.' 'My invariable rule is to put all my bothers and perplexities on the doormat outside my bedroom door, and shut them out, saying, "Remain there till I get up."'

About this time (1874) he became known as 'the man without a hat,' from his habit of going bareheaded, a most uncommon one in those days. His striking figure, hatless, with waving arms and rapid movements, naturally drew the attention of the roughs, and he received his full share of brickbats, broken bottles, and refuse of all sorts. Mrs. Booth was so concerned lest he should take cold, that she made him a little silk skull-cap that he could put in his pocket, and wear when he felt inclined to do so.

He was rarely at a loss for a congregation; he could raise one anywhere with or without help! Lieut.-Colonel Roberts tells us that one evening they went into a tiny court for their Open-Air Service. A large barrow stood in the court, and a number of the children shouted, 'You can't come here to-night, there's a barrow in the way.' They went on, however, and after the singing and praying, Railton stepped into the ring and started to address the people by saying, 'When I came into this court this evening, some of the little children said "You can't come here to-night because there's a barrow in the way." But, dear friends, that is the very reason why we have come, for we know that some of you would have come to Jesus long ago had there not been a "barrow" in the way. You will find these barrows no difficulty if you face them as we did.' And thus he held and gripped the attention of the crowd.

On another occasion he was the centre of a wild crowd, howling, hooting, yelling, and blowing whistles,

anything to make a din! 'Brothers, I am going to pray,' cried Railton, and at once he knelt down heedless of the wet, and prayed in such a way that the whole crowd became reverent and silent.

The fact that he led off his little band singing sacred words to the tune of 'My grandfather's clock,' then a popular song, somewhat marred the effect to a watching would-be Candidate, who tells us that, in spite of his admiration for Railton's courage, 'I remember still how shocked I was!'

Naturally, all this rough usage, added to the kneeling in the wet, was hard on Railton's clothes, and we are not surprised to learn from a contemporary that he was somewhat shabby at this time. Mr. Booth noticed his appearance, and was overheard to remark, 'Look you here, Railton, if you don't get some decent clothes, you and I will have a row!'

His friend goes on to explain that they were all more or less shabby in those days, 'As we did much praying, our things got worn out very soon, particularly at the knees. On one occasion Mr. Booth said to us, "I shall have to get you men some knee-pads, your trousers are so worn."'

Railton was ever a firm believer in kneeling to pray. 'Alas,' he once said, 'alas, that the fashion of standing up to make an address to the Almighty should ever have become general!'

He showed that care for others for which he was remarkable from an early age. One night he turned up at his Hall in a very light indoor coat. All the pockets were stuffed full of papers and letters. After much cross-questioning, which he found impossible to evade, he confessed shamefacedly to having given his overcoat to a needy man who had none of his own!

Brigadier Bennett, known then as 'The Black Prince,' from his raven curls and dark complexion, and who was among the earliest evangelists, says:

'I was very poor at that time, but he managed to look after me somehow. . . . I remember when I was ordered

to Rotherham I had nothing to put my few belongings in. When he found it out he went and *begged* a portmanteau somewhere, and brought it into the Hall on his shoulder in triumph. He himself got all my things together; but at the very last moment, fearing I should find no food on my arrival—for no one knew us there—he hastily sent out and bought a pot of jam and a quartern loaf, and sent me off with one under each arm! As soon as the riots began he came to help me. I often saw him bruised all over and the roughs rubbing pepper into his eyes! . . .

My Wedding Meetings were arranged by him. He invited, or I did at his advice, sixteen hundred roughs to a wedding feast. The Meetings lasted from 11 in the morning till 5.30 the next morning. I remember that "R." was quite fresh and dancing for joy when we finished with forty-four of those roughs weeping over their sins!

He came to us also in Leicester for Christmas, 1879. On Christmas-eve we were out until late into the night, and then started for an "All-Day" in the streets. We could not get the people into the Hall on Christmas Day, so Railton said, "I'll stay where they are, in the courts and back alleys." . . .

All through his life—and to the sorrow of his family in after years—he made it a point never to stay at home for Christmas; for, as he explained, 'Jesus left His Home for me on Christmas Day, and I want to do something for Him.'

Even as early as 1876 he was reaching out to those of other nationalities, and as he spoke French with ease he held Meetings in Soho for the benefit of the French population there.

Commissioner Ridsdel—in years of service only three months Railton's junior—shared in these early-day struggles. He was sent to open fire in a boxing booth at Five Dials, then a foreign neighbourhood of the very lowest. Railton arrived to help, and, hatless as usual, spoke in French both in the Hall and in the small neighbouring courts and alleys.

He used also to take a few of his special helpers to talk to the people about their souls as they waited in queues outside the West-End theatres. The theatre-

goers could not escape from him for fear of losing their places. He dealt with them faithfully, warning them of their danger if they did not turn to God. His words roused the most furious opposition. Once they actually succeeded in dragging off his coat, and tearing it into shreds; but wonderful conversions followed these onslaughts, and several foreigners were won for God.

From these incidents it must not be imagined that the Commissioner in any sense created or blundered into difficulties unintentionally. He constantly kept his object in view, and when he considered it best to do so, showed diplomacy and tact of a high order.

Captain (now Colonel) Unsworth recalls an experience in Salisbury which illustrates this. A cathedral city, and with very strong church influence, the inhabitants of Salisbury considered that religion after Salvation Army style was impossible. No real work for God could be carried on in the old tumble-down stores in which the noisy Meetings were held. Constant rioting in the Market Square therefore took place, the Captain and his little handful being hustled and howled down by those who considered they were 'doing God's service.'

Colonel Unsworth remembers how, amid the shouts, hoots, and execrations, the Commissioner—serene and undisturbed—stepped into the ring in the Market Square. He took off his cap, lifted his hand, and in reverent, ringing tones, proclaimed aloud with great emphasis: 'He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy Gospel.'

The crowd, startled by the familiar words, quoted, as all knew, from the 'Absolution,' quietened down, and with this as his text, the Commissioner spoke to solemnized and silent listeners. The Army, they found, was not a herd of ignorant cheap-jacks, but had in it those familiar with the beautiful Church of England Service, which the people of Salisbury loved so well.

One of Railton's more daring innovations, which shocked the elder members of the Mission, was a huge

announcement fixed across the old Whitechapel Headquarters :

THE SALVATION FAIR !

COME AND SEE THE FAT MAN, WEIGHING 333 POUNDS,
AND THE DWARF !

The ' fat man ' was Dr. Morrison, a giant, a qualified medical man, and an enthusiastic Salvationist; the dwarf was, of course, Commissioner Cadman, now retired, but one of the great originals and fighters of those days.

This extraordinary advertisement attracted the curiosity—among others—of young Hugh Whatmore, just starting on city life. Anxious to see these two prodigies, though quite indifferent to religious things, he found himself in the Whitechapel Hall. Sure enough there stood the giant and the dwarf. They spoke, and though he was not converted that night, the arrow of conviction entered his soul, and a few days later saw him at the Mercy-Seat. Railton interested himself in the new Convert, and insisted on his sharing in the ' Porch Meetings ' held at the entrance to the Hall.

Commissioner Whatmore still looks back to his first attempt at speaking ! He climbed trembling on to the form, only to discover that every idea had deserted him. All he could do was to stammer out one verse of the well-known hymn, ' I heard the voice of Jesus say '—and then down he scrambled, vowing that should be the last time he made such a fool of himself.

But to Railton's startling advertisement and to the Holiness Meetings led by General Bramwell Booth in the Whitechapel Hall, Commissioner Whatmore feels he owes the happy and honoured position he holds to-day in The Salvation Army.

Those early fighting days suddenly came to an end. ' At this interesting juncture,' Railton writes sorrowfully, even after the lapse of thirty-six long years, ' just when I was winning one of our decisive battles, I was to be swept for the time being off the field.' The great wonder is that he was not swept for ever off the

earth, since he took small-pox, and for a time his life was despaired of.

Before the disease had declared itself, whilst feeling increasingly out of sorts and ill, he wrote that remarkable book, 'Heathen England,' the forerunner of The Founder's world-famous 'Darkest England, and the Way Out.' For a long time he had wished to describe the appalling condition of the masses, but had lacked opportunity. How he managed to prepare the copy for over one hundred and eighty pages of fine type in those three miserable days we shall never know.

'I knew what was the matter with me, and fully expected to die,' he said later, 'and therefore the book was to constitute a sort of testimony to my generation.'

'Heathen England' was the first book of its kind, and the effect it produced can scarcely be understood to-day, when realistic writing has become so common. It ran rapidly through three editions, and created a great sensation, and widely different views were expressed. By some, of course, the facts given were vehemently contradicted; but not only did 'Heathen England' reveal the godless conditions of thousands in our great cities, it also brought General Booth's work before the public eye and became the great argument or apology for The Salvation Army.

On the Sunday, miserable as he was, he insisted on attending the Meetings for which he was announced. Some one hid his boots to prevent his leaving the house, but it was discovered later that he had escaped in slippers! However, when he found a suitable substitute to take his place, he wearily dragged home again, rolled into bed, and lapsed into unconsciousness. General Bramwell Booth says:

'He was terribly ill, and had been given up by the doctors, when I brought the late Mr. Metcalfe, the hydropathist, to him. I remember that morning his hands and feet were already cold, and the nurse had got a hot-water bottle to try and bring some animation into them. Railton himself thought the end had come. "It's no use, nurse," he said feebly, "*it's no use trying to warm up Jordan with*

hot-water bottles!” But hydropathy saved him, to the amazement of all.’

Whilst no effort was spared for his restoration in the Booth household, Railton’s helpers at Poplar remained constant in prayer. Among them was a man known for his wonderful power with God. One Sunday afternoon when Railton was at his worst this man got up in the ‘Free and Easy.’ ‘Brothers, rejoice with me,’ he said, ‘God gave me a message of peace concerning our Brother Railton this morning. “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” I believe we shall have Brother Railton amongst us again.’ And his faith was rewarded.

Though a wreck of his former self, the old spirit was still there, and as soon as possible after his recovery Railton hastened off to Headquarters, ‘with a veil over my still scaling face,’ to talk over the affairs of the Mission with its Superintendent. We are told by a helper that the day he began his work he was terribly weak, hardly able to walk in fact, but as fiery as ever. He had come through pouring rain, and all fully expected him to have a relapse, but he was none the worse.

His sickness had been a real grief and anxiety to the family to whom he had become so dear. After his recovery Mrs. Booth said that her husband had felt Railton’s illness and danger ‘to an extent she had never known him affected by any other threatened bereavement!’

CHAPTER VII

Railton and The Salvation Army

'Railton was to our dear General as a son, a servant, a seer, a prophet and friend. His whole-hearted confidence and devotion were very marked from the beginning, and some of the inspirations of those days were in the first instance inspirations in Railton's heart.'—GENERAL BRAMWELL BOOTH, at *Railton's Memorial Service, Westminster, July, 1913.*

THE union of these two men, William Booth and George Scott Railton, notwithstanding the twenty years difference in their ages, was a Providential dispensation. The transition stage from the Christian Mission to The Salvation Army needed most wise and careful handling. And in those anxious days Railton ably seconded The Founder, although his fiery zeal inclined him frequently to ride roughshod over everything and everybody likely to stand in the way of progress. Yet, under wise control he exercised a valuable influence at that juncture. Much as he admired the Christian Mission, and still more revered its Leader, he opposed Committeedom and the ordinary Church routine. And whilst The Founder fully sympathized with Railton's views, he could not at once make the radical changes his ardent new disciple urged. Had Railton been given his way the Christian Mission might quickly have become a wreck, and he its only survivor! What he sometimes thought could be done in weeks, often took months—nay, even years—to accomplish, but by care and time much was saved that would otherwise have been lost.

It was in January, 1877, that a Deputation, led by

Bramwell Booth and Mr. Railton, came to the General Superintendent. 'We did not give ourselves,' they said in effect, 'to form a little Church as an appendix of Methodism. We gave ourselves to *you* to be guided by *you*.'

Yet, not till the following year was the 'War Congress' held in which the new constitution was enacted, and as Railton said, 'we could call ourselves what we had indeed become—an Army.'

Of the Conference at which the wonderful transformation took place he writes:

'Every session was appropriated for thoroughly spiritual and practical purposes, and the whole concluded with a Night of Prayer in which all traces of dissatisfaction, if there were any—and I cannot recollect any manifestation of it, though several of the brethren had, I know, very much disliked many of the announcements made—vanished amidst the tremendous demonstrations of the Holy Spirit's power among us.

'The wonderful success that followed this gathering removed once and for all any doubt that we had got into the form that God desired. . . . Of course, we had disappointments; that is not to be wondered at. But only God's guidance and special protection could account for our marvellous immunity from moral disasters or serious collisions among ourselves during this rapid passage from democracy to extreme militarism.'

This, Railton—with his paradoxical nature—saw to be a great triumph, and of The Army's method of government he says later:

'About that system of leadership there must, of course, be all the disadvantages inseparable from fallible human leaders. But very seldom, in all the thirty years that have since rolled by, has any one fallen into the temptation of using his position for his own benefit, and the cases in which leaders have gone far astray in any way have been few.

'But as I think, on the other hand, of the tremendous development of individuals that has been the result of the authority put into their hands, I cannot but feel confirmed in all my views.'

Whilst the Annual Report for the past year was in course of preparation, the now self-evident fact that the Mission was no longer a Mission but an Army, made itself clear.

Mr. Begbie, in his 'Life of General William Booth,' tells (Vol. I, p. 438) the incident which definitely changed the name of the Christian Mission :

'Bramwell Booth and Mr. Railton were summoned early one morning to William Booth's bedroom to compare notes and to receive instructions for the day's work. Mr. Railton sat at a table writing; Mr. Bramwell Booth occupied a chair at his side; William Booth, in a long yellow dressing-gown and felt slippers, was walking up and down dictating his instructions. At that time the Volunteer Movement* was established, and was receiving derisive treatment at the hands of the public. The phrase occurred in the article which Mr. Railton was writing, "We are a volunteer army"; and when he came to read this out, young Bramwell Booth leaned back in his chair, glanced over his shoulder at the perambulating General Superintendent, and exclaimed: "Volunteer! Here, I'm not a volunteer. I'm a regular or nothing!" William Booth, who had stopped walking at this interruption, studied his son for a moment, and then coming to the table, leaned over Mr. Railton's shoulder, took the pen from his hand, scratched out the word "Volunteer," and wrote in its place the word "Salvation."

"The effect," says Mr. Bramwell Booth, "of that one word upon Railton and me was really quite extraordinary. We both sprang from our chairs. I remember that I exclaimed 'Thank God for that!' And Railton was equally enthusiastic."

The adoption of the name served to reveal what had been already seen—that the Mission had become an Army. This being recognized, it followed naturally that a uniform and a flag were needed, and both were immediately adopted. Then came titles and other features which befitted the organization of an Army.

Progress during the next two years was startlingly rapid, but with it came the bitterest storms of persecution from all quarters: the Church, the Press, the

* The Territorial Force of that day.

authorities, and the denizens of public-house and slum. At this crisis the ready pen and active brain of the Secretary, Mr. Railton, rendered good service. His loyalty to his Chief, and his affection, together with his unbounded faith in his work, were a precious and much-prized blessing, when even some of those most relied on forsook their Leader and fled, and when cruel criticisms and slanderous falsehoods were the order of the day.

To one of the bitterest critics Railton, with the approval of The General, thought it wise to reply. So masterly was his answer that 'The Times,' commenting upon his letter, said that 'though not much was known of "General Booth," he evidently had a good "ghost behind his chair" in the man who signed himself "Railton."'

He was also of great value when the first 'Orders and Regulations' came to be drafted, by which the military system of The Army's government was emphasized and the lines laid down on which the work was to be carried forward.

General Bramwell Booth explains :

'Of course at this time there was no one actually in the running but Railton and me. Dowdle was the closest to us both, but he never had quite the same position. We two acted as my Father's scouts; or, to use another illustration, as Aaron and Hur to their leader Moses.

'Railton deferred to me in a wonderful way, and would even ask my advice and help in personal and spiritual matters, accepting my judgment with the humility of a child. He was the soul of loyalty, never attempting in any way to displace me with my Father, but always pushed me to the front, and jealously guarded my position. In my absence he would most honourably respect my wishes, but in my presence would, if he differed, fight me fearlessly. These "tussles" were, as a matter of fact, the origin of our Army Councils. The Founder would listen to one side, then ask the other, "What do you say?" After hearing both views argued out, he would give his own deliberate decision.'

But his two helpers cannot have been too easy to manage! General Bramwell Booth feels that in those

days he was himself sometimes very rigid, and inclined to be too 'pious' in manner; while Railton, on the other hand, was often extreme. 'You two fellows,' The Founder would say to them, 'have only got one row of holes in your peep-show, while I have got three or four or five.*' 'Do not be too ready,' The Founder would say, 'to hold back when God is working; don't limit your vision to one row of holes.'

The young men would bring him all kinds of new ideas and suggestions, and he would say, 'Go on. See what you can make of them!' They experimented, and returned to tell him the result. If they failed, and others complained of them, The Founder would say to the complainers, 'All right! I'll settle them'; and to the pair, 'That's no good; let it go!' But if they succeeded, then he was willing at once to embark on the new line.

'Railton was at that time very hard on wobblers and slackers,' says The General. 'He expected from others the same boundless self-sacrifice and devotion which he showed himself, and had little patience with any who came short.' The following extracts from two of his letters illustrate this trait, which, however, became greatly modified in later life:

'We can raise and train Soldiers of the very first quality, if we are only stiff enough; but the system of dependence upon buildings and a central fund must be ended, and people who turn their heads backwards must be shot down. God's system of cutting connexion the moment people grieve Him is the only plan.'

And again, from Glasgow:

'I nearly killed two of them last night, and assured everybody we were come to do to the Scotch as the Highlanders did in India in 1858-59—settle all disputes without arguments, by bullets and bayonets.'

But there were in his life many crossings of his

* The old-fashioned penny peep-shows of that day had often a lower row of holes for the children and small people, a middle row for the medium-sized, and a highest row still for the very tall.

own way and wish. These, sanctified by the Divine Power, became fruitful influences in moulding his character, in sinking deeper wells of spiritual force, and of submission to the will of God, and in thus bringing out the more tender and patient side of his nature. Quoting again from General Bramwell Booth :

‘ Railton was almost like a kaleidoscope—the unexpected was continually presenting itself. He seemed made up of opposites. Though the last man to admit the mystical, he was intensely alive to things pertaining to the other world. Indeed, so appreciative was he of the eternal, and so supreme was his realization of the soul, that he would scarcely admit it had any connexion with the body.’

This raised difficulties in respect to his business capacity. He had at that time a fixed notion that debt—so long as it was for God—did not matter. ‘ I have often heard him argue strongly,’ says The General, ‘ that it was right to borrow without much actual security so long as the lender was willing; and when we were unusually hard pressed for money, he was always ready with the suggestion—“ Pop (that is mortgage or sell) a chapel.”’

‘ As to being relieved of financial responsibility, nobody can manage that except by going to the work-house!’ Such is a characteristic declaration of Railton’s scribbled as part of a memo to The Founder on the back of an old telegraph form.

To a great extent, this unconventional view of finance remained with him through life. He had small patience with the careful allocation of various sums to separate funds, and was often the despair of cashiers and auditors. The Commissioner at one time favoured the ‘ War Chest ’ idea—all the money being put together and taken out by the handful as it was required! The General continues thoughtfully :

‘ Those who knew him in later years would scarcely believe how strongly he at first opposed some matters to which later he became extremely favourable. Notwithstanding his enthusiasm and zeal he was conservative by nature. He moved slowly; not without hesitation in some

matters. Still, when once convinced that a course was right, his natural radicalism asserted itself, and he threw himself into the new departure with heart and soul.

'For instance, while he wished women to have their full share of preaching and even of leading Meetings, he was slow to allow them the government of a Corps. He considered that to give them the control and management of men was unwise, and he fought this step for some time. Yet later his confidence in the executive power of woman was unsurpassed.

'At first, too, he disliked the thought of our taking up children's work—in spite of the lesson of his own conversion and that of The Founder. We ought not to spend our strength on teaching the children—"Sunday Schoolism" he called it; our business was the conversion of the drunkard, the outcast, and the careless, and let them take care of their own children.

'He feared it would be a mere aping of the churches, and lay the foundation-stone of a deadly, stultifying respectability. But, finally, no one was more interested in that branch of our work than he, and a gathering of children was amongst his greatest delights.'

It is remarkable to find that for some years the Commissioner did not realize the mighty power of the Press for reaching the unconverted. In 1877 he writes discouragingly on the subject to Mrs. Booth:

'I rather wonder that you should attach any value to writing on religion, knowing how little people will read. I suppose your idea is, that if we only pour out plenty there will be the more chance of a little taking effect. I feel inclined, on the other hand, to look on printing as waste paper. Nothing is of any use but taking people by the throat. The Apostles wrote to nobody but those they had first taken by the throat.'

Yet later, few writers, with the exception of his Leaders, were more effective than Railton in reaching the conscience of the sinner, and he played a great part in the creation of the literature of The Salvation Army.

Again, General Bramwell Booth tells us that for many years Railton took a curious view of the Bible,

probably as a rebound from its undue exaltation which was leading so many people at that time to become mere 'Bible students,' while doing little or nothing to reach those for whom its message was intended. Therefore, though knowing his Bible from cover to cover, and able to quote from and use it often with almost matchless effect, he would not, at one time, even carry a Bible with him when he travelled, fearing that mere Bible study might occupy Salvationists more than the importance of the possession of experimental religion!

Though far from backward in expressing and standing up for his own opinions, this was never because they were his personally, but rather because he honestly believed that if carried out they would be for the general good. When, however, The Founder after mature deliberation would decide: 'Very well, but the boat has to go *this* way,' Railton's invariable reply would be a cheerful and whole-hearted, 'All right then; all hands to the oars!' and no more was heard of his opinions.

His ability, not only to give in, but to throw himself fully into the opposite plan, was an evidence of Railton's greatness. General Bramwell Booth gives as a reason for this the fact that the Commissioner's opinions were entirely selfless; all he cared for was that Christ's cause should neither be hindered nor injured. His differences of opinion with his Leaders—and truth compels us to say that they were not few—were upon matters of method rather than of fundamental principles. But in later years these differences often became acute, causing anxiety and in some cases even distress on both sides. General Bramwell Booth says:

'We differed, for instance, about the Social Scheme. He feared it was a turning aside from the highest to secondary things; whereas my Father believed—and experience has confirmed his faith—that it would help to anchor The Army to the strata of the submerged, so that we might seek for the Salvation, not only of the deserving, but of the undeserving poor, and also prove another wing to enable us to fly higher.

'But no one could rejoice more whole-heartedly in the possibilities of the Social Work than did Commissioner Railton when once the scheme was fairly launched. My last sight of him, strangely enough, was in the Blackfriars Shelter, London. The Meeting had closed, and Railton, still on his knees, had his arms around a poor, woe-begone drunkard, and was talking to him with the tender, hopeful spirit of a brother.

'Probably in no other organization could Railton have found a permanent home, but The Salvation Army gives people scope. We had room for him, and my Father was enabled to harness and use his marvellous powers and personality for the benefit of the whole world.'

The question of Uniform came up as early as 1875, when, in a letter to Mrs. Booth, Railton deals exhaustively with it in relation to the question of women's dress. He writes:

'I am puzzled to know what line to take. . . . It seems to me that the strongest line of argument is that this desire to dress up is a worldly lust, and to insist that if any one follows a lust which is so universally manifest amongst the unconverted, they are evidently going with the multitude to do evil. "Oh, but," some one will say, "I don't look into shop windows, I wear no jewellery, no gaudy finery; I wear neither chignon nor pads of any kind; I have no more dresses than are necessary, and am not extravagant in money or time for dress." And yet all the time this woman with good taste may be just as much in earnest to dress for effect as the others who have common taste.

'What is worldly dress?' he asks later. 'It really seems almost a pity that Jesus was not a woman, and that we have no life of a model woman in the Bible as we have of a man. (I should not mind arguing that this arises from the stupidity of the great men before and after Christ, who would never suffer a woman to teach or to usurp authority over the man, and who consequently prevented any woman from becoming such a one as God could have shown for a model.) . . .

'I confess the more I study the matter the more difficult it seems to strike out on a line of thought that shall affect people at all. I cannot see that Christ ever *definitely* touches

the question—a remarkable reticence. I have no doubt God was pleased with Sarah, were she bare-necked, armed, and footed according to the artists; and He certainly loathed the ornamented daughters of Israel in luxurious times, but somehow neither Moses nor Christ seems to have any definite instructions on the point. . . .

'Is there any other proper way to deal with dress but to bring every one to one uniform system, just as we bring people to total abstinence, and would the result be worth the trouble?'

It is interesting to know that 'Captain' Railton it was who provided Commissioner Howard with his first bit of uniform. As they walked together in the streets of Belfast, Railton in a cap of army shape, while the Commissioner wore what is commonly called 'a flat-topped bowler,' 'R.' felt that his companion was not distinctive enough. He suggested putting a mark upon the 'bowler.' So out of his pocket came a duplicate of what he wore himself round his cap—a little plate of tin upon which was printed in very crude letters the words, 'Salvation Army.' A hole had been bored in each end of the plate, and producing a piece of string, he tied the plate across the front of his friend's hat. 'That,' says Commissioner Howard, 'was a push into the out-and-out spirit of The Salvation Army, for which I shall always owe Railton a debt of gratitude.'

While at first—strange as it may seem to some—objecting to the general wearing of Uniform on the ground that it might tend to separate The Army from the people, as soon as he recognized its value Commissioner Railton became its most enthusiastic advocate. He was the first to wear it as his ordinary dress, and, in fact, for years possessed no other garments that were not Uniform.

The Commissioner's idea was that Salvation Army Uniform should be so rough, coarse, and plain that no one would wish to wear it for the sake of its appearance or texture. Many a battle did he wage with his brother Commissioners on this subject! His ideal (for

all ranks) was a short, unbraided jacket of common serge, with brass S's on it. He was the first Staff Officer to introduce and wear the red jersey.

From America he wrote criticizing a portrait which had appeared :

' Another fashionable bonnet ! And not a vestige of uniform ! Why can't these young ladies at least wear the old Mission bonnet, if they will have nothing to show their connexion with The Salvation Army ? I thank God nobody can recognize *that* face, anyway ! '

In the same letter he writes :

' I don't like the idea of spiked helmets. Don't let us *copy* anybody. A spike is of no use to us. But I think Majors might have three-cornered hats or something to distinguish them in " Big Goes." The three-cornered hat would also come nearer to a woman's.'

Railton loved and honoured the Flag. The Army Mother, in the last year of her life, when lying in great suffering, asked for an Army Flag to be placed above her head. Railton hearing of this wrote to her :

' The request for the Flag gives me volumes of comfort as to the enjoyment of the War which you have within as you lie outwardly at the lowest ebb of life. May this glorious experience grow more and more precious as weakness and pain cut you off increasingly from outer fellowship with us.

' I do wish I could be of more use as a comforter to you or to anybody. But I suppose I must be content with " every one in his own order " ; and the fact of my being in Manchester* as Watchman of the House of Israel may, I hope, be of real resting value to the hearts of you all during the next few trying days.

' We shall survive, and have ages to laugh over all this combination of sadnesses and trials.

' Ever the same,
' R.'

* Where an important legal action (settled, as a matter of fact, at the last moment out of court) was then expected.

CHAPTER VIII

Pioneer Work in U.S.A.

'Oh, they're helpless nobodies,'
Our enemies make boast,
They forget that with us
Comes the Almighty Holy Ghost,
And unseen battalions
Of the glorious heavenly host,
As we go marching to Glory.

March on, march on! We bring the jubilee.
Fight on, fight on! Salvation makes us free.
We'll shout our Saviour's praises over every land and sea,
As we go marching to Glory.

(Tune: 'Marching through Georgia.')

—G. S. R.

IN October, 1878, Amos Shirley, with his wife and daughter, all Converts of the Coventry Branch of the Christian Mission, settled in Philadelphia, Pa. They at once saw the spiritual need of the place and began to hold Open-Air Meetings, followed by cottage gatherings, similar to those to which they had been accustomed at home. The inevitable results followed: abuse, persecution of all sorts, and then the old cry, 'What must I do to be saved?' A disused chair factory was hired for a Hall, and in a short time they had a flourishing band of Converts around them. But the Shirleys were working-people, unable to give their full time to this evangelistic work, so they wrote to Mr. Booth, stating the facts, and pleading, 'You *must* come over and help us.'

This was like a bugle call to Railton's ardent spirit,

for he had been longing to advance still further, and when The General hesitated as to the wisdom of accepting his offer to help across the Atlantic, he urged his plea in a far-seeing letter to Mrs. Booth. He writes:

‘I feel sure that our own affair in Philadelphia will go with such a sweep that unless we get hold of it, and lead, and go in at full speed at once, I doubt if we should ever be able to get the reins at all. Then it will be a wild affair with no competent direction, and there will be after a while as complete a lull as follows almost all such things.

‘Now there are circumstances of necessity which set aside all ordinary laws and rules, and I do think it is a great pity to let so grand a tide pass us. . . . As we have now got a good editor for “War Cry,” and a good second for B., I do not see why they should not let me go. New York is, after all, only nine days farther off than Chester. The General seemed almost in for it last night, but is not so to-day. . . .

‘Yours never content,

‘G. S. RAILTON.’

His cup of joy was full, when further consideration—perhaps strengthened by Mrs. Booth’s influence—led The General to determine to accept his Secretary’s suggestion, and thus to Railton was granted the privilege of laying the foundation-stone of The Army’s Internationalism.

From his earliest Christian Mission days he had been a strong advocate of women’s ministry. No one was therefore surprised when he requested that his helpers should be six girls, or ‘Hallelujah Lasses,’ as they were then called, under the care of one older woman Officer. In the first place, he wanted to show what women, inspired by the power of the Holy Ghost, could do; and, secondly, he desired that the future Officers of the United States should, as far as possible, be Americans. America must, he maintained, make its own Officers if there was to be anything like progress.

The eight were all to set out in full uniform, which

was then in its early days. The red tin plate with the yellow lettering, that could be tied on to hat or arm, was not very general, and the 'Hallelujah bonnet' had only just been introduced. The party created a great sensation at the Farewell Meeting in the Whitechapel Hall. Mrs. Booth, who had taken deep interest in the undertaking from the beginning, presented them with two Flags, one for the Philadelphia Corps, and another for 'New York I that was to be!'

'I hand these Flags to you,' she said, 'praying that God may give you, young as you are, strength to fight heroically under His banner, and to lead tens of thousands to the Cross.'

A still greater sensation was created two days later when the party marched from Headquarters to Fenchurch Street Station. Mrs. Booth described it in a letter to a friend:

The getting off of dear Railton and the Sisters was a scene! Hundreds of people walked with the procession to Fenchurch Street. They sang all the way, and vehicles of all sorts stopped and lined the roads to see them pass. They marched from Tidal Basin to the ship. We had half an hour there, during which time a ring was formed and a Meeting held. The crew and passengers on the ship seemed quite struck!

'It was a grand sight. The women's hats looked capital, having a broad crimson band with gold letters. Three of our Flags were flying on board. Dear, devoted Railton looked well in his uniform,* and appeared as happy as an angel. Bless him! I love him as a son.'

The Commissioner's good-bye letter to The General shows how warmly this love and confidence was reciprocated:

'MY DEAR GENERAL,—I cannot properly reply to your precious letter, nor indeed could any suitable reply be made in language to all the love and kindness which the whole family have testified to me even this one day.

'One thing I must say, that I have almost feared lest the absence of any sign of other than joyous feeling on my

* The first complete suit of Salvation Army uniform to be worn.

part should leave any one in doubt as to my heart's realization of value and of loss.

'I do, indeed, thank God that I am not yet allowed to realize what I must needs feel only too often ere long—that I am going away from all my world. Whenever that sense of solitude does come it will always be a grateful alleviation for me to remember that you have only been severed from a part of yours to-day.

'We shall certainly gain a new world over it, since we shall always share alike in everything.

'Yours,

'R.'

'My Officers seem as if all the parting were a mere incident of daily life, like a little disturbance in the Open-Air, which was now over and need cause them no more concern. The fact is, we are all so thoroughly satisfied that "filled with God, we'll shake America," that all that lies between us and that result is marvellously insignificant.'

The voyage was a long and stormy one, lasting over three weeks. His Officers, one and all, were prostrate. They lay about on the cold deck (it was February), and 'didn't care what became of them!' Their leader, sympathetic as always, surveyed his little troop and tried to speak a word of cheer. He told them they would soon be better—seasickness was a transitory ailment; but they didn't believe a word of it! Then he tried spiritual comfort and sang cheerily, 'Oh, we are going to wear a crown!' But crowns proving to be equally unattractive, he suggested that if they held a Meeting it might make them forget their misery. Moans of anguish greeted this proposal, so there was nothing to do but wait for better times.

The first Meeting on land was held at Castle Gardens. As soon as they got off the ship they knelt down and claimed 'America for Jesus.' A large crowd gathered around, wondering who these peculiar nun-like girls were, and setting them down as some concert-hall troupe. The hearty singing of—

With a sorrow for sin let repentance begin,
Then conversion of course will draw nigh,

proclaimed them as 'religious,' but—well, it was a form of religion not generally known in the States. Newspaper reporters cross-questioned them, and as a consequence of their reports various leaders of religious Meetings offered them the loan of halls and churches. An enterprising young Vaudeville manager proposed to give them two hours in the middle of his Sunday night performance! The minister who had kindly lent them the use of his church for week-nights was horrified when he heard of the offer. 'It is the most disreputable den in the United States,' he explained, 'in the worst slum of the city! Go there and you will lose your reputation at once!' 'Then that's the place for us!' was the only answer he received.

The theatre was jammed out in spite of the twenty-five cents admission fee, and Harry Hill, the owner, offered to share with them the profits he had made. But this was declined. Naturally, next morning's papers recorded this strange Meeting, and when the party repaired as usual to the Fulton Street noonday Prayer Meeting they were met with cold disapproval.

But it was all part of the Lord's plan. The invitation for the congregation to present any requests for special prayer had scarcely been given when a kind-hearted brother rose, and said, 'Will you please pray that The Salvation Army may have a proper Hall in which to hold its Meetings?' With almost startling rapidity the answer came, for immediately another brother stood up and replied, 'They shall have our Hall free of charge for one month.'

The first Convert in this Hall was 'Ash-Barrel Jimmy,' a well-known old drunken reprobate, who got his nickname by tumbling into an ash-barrel head first, and sticking fast there till he was taken out. After his conversion Jimmy lived a consistent Christian life for fifteen years, and died a triumphant death. This remarkable man attracted still more attention and drew numbers of people to the Meetings, so that at the end of the month the friends the party had made subscribed

enough money to enable them to rent a Hall on Seventh Avenue, and the real work of The Salvation Army began. All sorts of people came to the Meetings—rich, poor, drunkards, thieves, and infidels, as well as the thoughtful members of the various Christian denominations. There were many conversions nightly.

The lasting nature of the work is proved by the fact that at a recent Methodist Congress held in the States, sixty of the ministers present were known to be Converts of The Salvation Army. One of the number said that he knew of five Episcopal clergymen who also were Army Converts.

Writing to London the Commissioner says :

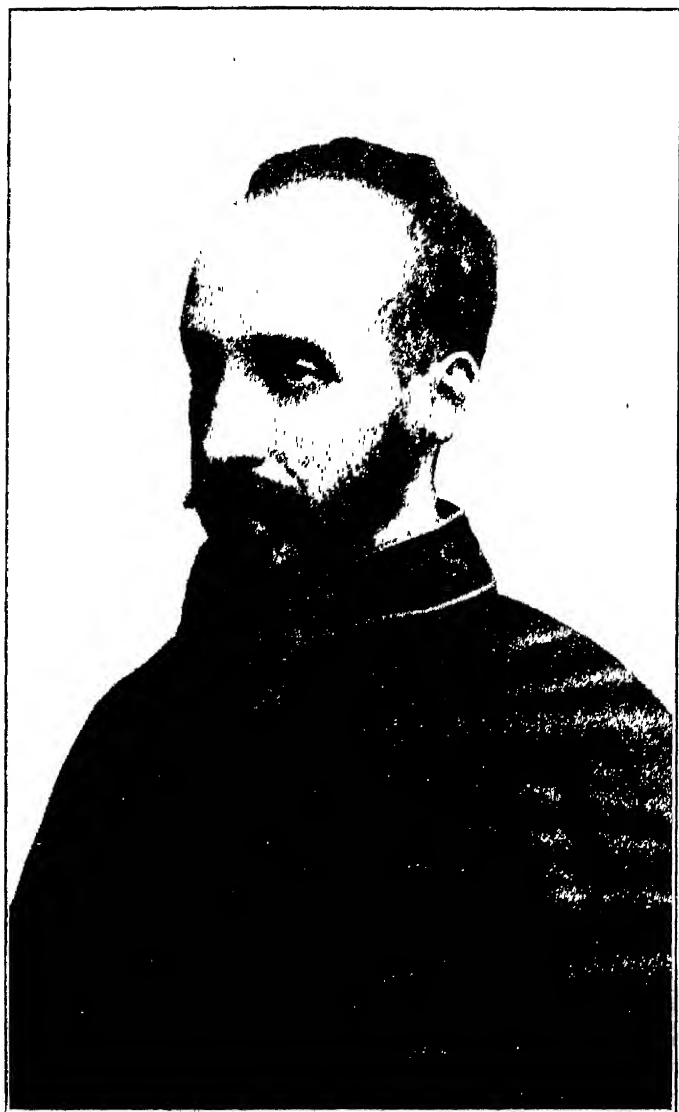
‘The uniform is a blessing. All New York wants to have us by this time. Indeed, they came and begged us to have Service in the great Rotunda. You will see from enclosed extracts that we are at present the lions of New York.’

The papers, indeed, declared that if a man steeped in whisky would only go to The Salvation Army Hall he could be made into an angel in five minutes! They also photographed the Penitent-Form, with the rich and the poor kneeling side by side.

‘The girl-Officer here,’ he goes on, ‘has got married, which is frightfully easy in this country. A few dollars for a warrant, and then off to any minister’s house, or wherever he likes to do it. This will not make me any the more cautious; no, not a bit of it. We must run at a high enough speed to jump ravines here. No other chance.’

His code words for cabling are explained as follows: ‘“*Unkempt*” is the direct word for our names; “*unkennelled*” for “The War Cry,” not at all inappropriate, unless the first were taken too personally!’

As soon as the New York Corps was opened, ‘Commissioner’ Railton, as he was now called, The General having considered this title suited to the Officer who represented him in America, pushed on to Newark, N.J., and Philadelphia, leaving two women-Officers in each place.



COMMISSIONER RAILTON IN 1878



COMMISSIONER RAILTON IN 1884

In some cities where he went to look out good openings and start the Work single-handed, he was, as he said afterwards, 'Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeant-Major, Hall-Keeper, and Chucker-out!' Often he would leave the platform in the middle of an address, put out some hopelessly unruly man, usually the worse for drink, and then go calmly back and take up the thread of his discourse again.

As he travelled alone the details of his doings can never be fully known, but fragments of his letters to his Leaders give us some insight into his aggressive, fiery spirit:

'10th April.—It is good to have a God who can and does help at every step, or rather at every rush, for how can anybody step till there is a good road made? He will establish our "goings," which in our edition will read "rushes" (France included*).'

A week later:

'I am all the time fretting and fuming because I cannot go at the same speed and be every way as big as a first-class concern. But it's no use, a few weeks are not enough. Still, what am I here for but to "fret and fume" if things do not go fast enough? It is surely not my duty to set my affections on things beneath.

'You ask about my brother ——. He could not run at The Army's pace. . . . I remember how exhausted he was after his last day in London when only looking on.'

About some difficulty concerning seats, he writes:

'Atlantic City. May 16th.—The Salvation Army will never sit very much! We shall be kneeling, standing up for Jesus, marching about the city, and generally demonstrating.

'I have more opportunity than ever to test and to enjoy the friendship of God, and His strengthening and refreshing presence will keep me triumphant right through. It is worth while even to have one's heart overwhelmed sometimes in order to enjoy the Rock.

'21st June.—You cannot realize the saving to me of

* Where The General's eldest daughter had lately planted the Flag.

not being bothered about anything! I remembered with amusement on Saturday night that I had never remarked in my letters, nor even to myself, about our loss in Atlantic City. I pass so suddenly to the desire to be rid of anybody unworthy of us that I never realize the loss. If I can get the Americans, Germans, and Africans all fairly started, I hope by stirring such up to hearty rivalry to keep them all at full gallop.

‘I have felt horribly below the mark, but I eat and sleep, and shall come all right again directly, no doubt.’

It is interesting to find how closely the memories of his Officers of those far-off days bear out the passing reference we find in his correspondence as to his own style of living. One of these tells us: ‘A huge painted notice the full length of a large building told all passers-by that this was “The Headquarters of The Salvation Army for America.” But did any one investigate they discovered the “Headquarters” located in an underground cellar, in which Railton worked for some months.’ Not till long after did his Officers know how sorely he was pressed for money, having sometimes hardly enough to eat. They could have helped him easily; but he never spoke of his own needs, though keenly anxious as to the health and well-being of his people.

The Work rapidly increased; new centres were opened and new Soldiers added to the various Rolls.

Though so indifferent to his own comfort, the Commissioner had yet the highest appreciation of every little kindness shown to him, and enjoyed to the full the care and attention he so rarely allowed himself to receive. The following significant paragraph was written when he had been more than six months in the States:

‘14th July.—Back from Beulah Land to the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The motherly welcome of dear old Mrs. Lloyd, whose son was one of the first, if not *the* first Convert at Aberdeen, was the first real glimpse of comfort I have had this side of the ocean.’

And again :

' I had quite a beautiful surprise this morning, in the shape of a new coat brought me by Captain —, who had used it on the voyage over; a man's coat which she hoped to wear in winter and couldn't. It does not fit me well, but it is better than this shabby one.'

At the close of May, 1880, the first Officers' Councils in the United States were held in New York and Philadelphia. His account of these is decidedly original. That he had evidently expected his Officers to travel at his own breakneck speed, with disastrous consequences to their nerves, appears from the following :

' 1st June, 1880.—The work at New York has been and is wonderful. . . . It is one of the grandest triumphs of the Divine Power working with nobodies. . . .

' Our first Council was surpassed at Newark yesterday. Of course, the veterans of the 1st New York are only of two months' date. But I should think for that very reason the Meeting accomplished more. Towards the end they were praying two or three at once. In the afternoon there was an improvement in the speaking of Officers, who understood the line better. But just at 2.20 our American Army was in a funny predicament.

' Captain — was fearfully ill downstairs, attended by two Officers.

' Captain —, who had taken next to nothing for days, was frightfully ill upstairs, attended by two other Officers.

' Lieutenant —, aproned, was running round the corner to get some mustard.

' Captain — was running up and down stairs saying we should be late.

' Captain — was pulling herself together after being seized and frightened by Captain — as she was going off in a faint.

' Captain — was finishing an ice-cream.

' The Commissioner was brushing his trousers to fill up time, laughing at that fact and at the general pose of things.

'However, all the Officers gathered themselves up and spoke and prayed At afternoon and night. . . .

'Grand march with New York Flag and everybody with uniform or a badge—a hundred nearly, I guess—before evening Meeting.'

Of the All-Night which concluded these Councils, and was a departure then unknown in the States, he says:

'The All-Night—though only fifty or sixty were there—was the best thing yet. Almost all present were young men, but their enthusiasm was unsurpassable. To see all their faces and watch them clapping their hands while we sang, "Take me as I am," was a sight never to be forgotten.* Tobacco was rather too much perhaps the butt. But it is no small thing to get two Corps of tobaccoless young men.† We had thirty or forty out, and there is no doubt a very great work was done in many hearts. A young Berlin German—really a splendid fellow, only converted to God ten days—gave himself up for the Work. He is the likeliest chap I have seen yet to make a permanent C.S.,‡ and would help me to learn German, which I must do at once. . . .

'When I reflect that these Councils are held barely ten weeks after the start, that most of the Officers had hardly ever led a Meeting before that time, this is really astonishing work with grand promise in it.'

Many earnest Christian workers, both in and outside the ranks of The Salvation Army, date their conversion from these Meetings. The first child-convert in New York developed into a Staff Officer years later.

The summer brought great strain and ceaseless toil for both the Commissioner and his devoted Officers. As yet he had not appreciated the possible effects of the American heat on already over-taxed constitutions.

* The Salvation Army custom of accompanying singing by clapping the hands in strict time produces, with a large concourse of people, an effect impossible for outsiders to realize.

† The Regulations of The Salvation Army allow none to hold office in its ranks who use tobacco in any form.

‡ The Chief Secretary, or Second in Command.

Towards the end of July he writes to Mrs. Booth :

‘ This is a queer climate : such a mixture of intense heat and storm and cold. It produces extremes of depression and elation that I can hardly reconcile with good health. My love to all the family steadily increases.’

He wonders whether the heavenly warfare may not be easier than that of the earthly combatants, adding in a truly Railtonian passage :

‘ That I question though, for it makes the Revelation a very gassy book if the celestials take things quietly. If I just thought they were sitting at their ease whilst my women-Officers here are getting killed, I guess I’d give them a look when I got there such as I feel inclined to give our men here very often ! But perhaps I should still feel constrained to keep my looks to myself for fear of driving them away to Hell altogether.

‘ Oh, no, thank God, those who have really got eternal life must be really alive, scratching and tearing all the time just as we do, only more so. Only fancy us when we are infinitely more ethereal and lively than a mosquito ! ’

Occasionally he seems to have lost patience with American ways, for he writes in the same letter, ‘ God save France and the world from any more Republics and educated Democracies ! ’ But his admiration for women in general, and American women in particular seemed to grow, and is amusingly expressed from Philadelphia, also in a letter to The Army Mother :

‘ Those English may stick to their men as hard as they like, but I am certain it is the women who are going to burst up the world generally, especially American women. I am sorry my poor Officers have not stood the climate, though I cannot help feeling relieved to see them go home to England. They have done nobly—(and they had indeed, as the work left behind clearly testified)—but they are nowhere beside people like —, who is only a seamstress, and yet has intelligence and grasp to take in and carry out my ideas. . . .

‘ Women helpers and money I must have ; I want no more from England. Plead for me, and for France, as I see

you have done. Only think of a big city with no coin under 5 cents ($2\frac{1}{2}$ d.), enough to make a purse's mouth water !'

In the light of subsequent events, such as the progress of woman's position in the U.S.A., and the granting of women's suffrage in so many lands, the following is remarkable :

'American ladies are rapidly getting the first front places in the world. Yet no person has the wit or the diligence to make more of them. . . . There will be one day a rising of these women again, as rapid and incontestable as the other. . . . It is worth our while to complete our mine.'

His Leaders were evidently afraid that he was pushing ahead too rapidly, and involving the Headquarters in London with expenditure beyond its power to meet, for in answer to a warning, the Commissioner replies :

'How could we appeal, either to God or man, if we stopped in our trenches all the time? To advance is one of the necessities of life—to me anyhow—and advancing where nobody has been means getting into a desert where there is sure to be famine coming now and then, and lots worse than that. Poor old Moses' army all bolted at once, but neither he nor Joshua had any rent to pay.

'If I had authority to send out bands of my men to spoil the Gentiles, I'd never telegraph you any more except to say how much we'd got.

'Well, you'll see we'll spoil them yet. We shall come right, as The General says. Yes, as sure as there's a God in Heaven and one on earth, we'll come right !'

As we have seen, the Commissioner was too much of a genius and enthusiast to be a man of business in the ordinary sense of the term ; and the burden of finance and general management pressed heavily upon him. He writes on one occasion :

'Oh, that you could realize what it is to be hard up in sober reality, with a lot of people and places hanging on you ! But never you mind, we'll get along and go ahead without any of you. . . .'

And again, in words which will find an echo in many an Officer's heart :

' Now as to money I must say something. Nobody can feel more disgusted and ashamed than I at the record of the balance-sheet and at the need for more cash. But what am I to do? . . . The landlord of — writes me he must have money in a way that makes me think he's nearly smashed and that the place may be sold up any day. My printers cut me even worse by their kind way of writing with a merely added hint that a remittance on account when I can would be agreeable !

' I must confess I have ceased to care or worry. If the East* all goes to pot, I cannot help it. I have got no rich people to go to yet, and never shall till I can afford to send " The War Cry " out freely to such people after I have got them. God could easily put up many a one to send me 1,000 dollars or two. But He doesn't; and we may yet have to endure shame and sorrow utterly beyond imagining. It is no small part of that to ask you for help, knowing how you are pressed. What can I do? What could anybody do? There is scarcely a Church anywhere but has to resort to these mean entertainments to keep going, leaving parsons often largely unpaid.

' — has, to my astonishment, lifted New York out of debt up to twenty-four dollars in hand. All will come up with patience. What can I say but " Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all " ? '

His experience in St. Louis is the last glimpse of American warfare for which we have space. St. Louis apparently did not want The Army. Hall after Hall was taken, and then refused when information of the sort of congregations this apparently harmless-looking and well-mannered Englishman attracted—congregations that broke seats and chairs, hooted, cat-called, ate peanuts, and spat on the floor ! Unfortunately, it was all too true. He might soften the facts a trifle, but he could not deny them any more than he could guarantee the respectable audience for which he was by no means anxious. All great leaders have had their days of

* Eastern States.

doubt, and 'R.' was no exception. While travelling to the city a few days before Christmas, 1880, he writes :

'Surely if ever Providence did its level best against anybody and anything it's against me and this expedition. I often think of that "stars in their courses" text. But, thank God, the stars got badly hit this time, for this Sisera will neither despair, run, nor be down, to oblige them.

'We ought to invent a new "S," which should, if possible, be such as to do for as many languages as possible. We'll put our mark everywhere yet. If I am to be crushed, you may be sure I'll make the machinery pretty hot before it gets through!'

Neither would the St. Louis authorities have him on the streets. A man who tore round the town, making the peaceful Sabbath echo with announcements and invitations to weird gatherings, starting rows in saloons, was not to be tolerated.

In his first American 'War Cry' he tells us his plan of campaign :

'It struck me that the authorities of the city could have no power over the iced Mississippi, especially on the Illinois side. So after distributing handbills to the host of men hard at work all Sunday sawing and hauling ice to the store houses, I went over to the part where the skaters were, and began to sing :

Sinners, whither would you wander?

Whither would you stray?

Oh, remember, life is slender,

'Tis but a short day.

'It was quite a novelty to have a congregation come skating round one at a speed that made it seem certain some would overturn the others, but they were too skilful for that. I felt blessedly at home whilst urging them to seek God.'

The first 'War Cry' appeared in January, 1881, and was published in St. Louis, where the Commissioner, for the time being, had his Headquarters, once again in a cellar. The paper appeared at irregular intervals, for, to quote from the first number : "'War

Cry " No. 2 will be issued on the 15th February, or sooner if possible; but the fact is, the Commissioner's hands are full with St. Louis at present! '

This was true, his hands were indeed full, for even his intrepid spirit was forced to own that ' To begin alone in such a winter and in such a city is not the easiest of tasks, and demands a hearty surrender of nearly all my time and thought for awhile.'

He reduced his personal expenditure to the lowest possible limit by sleeping throughout the long winter on a heap of ' War Crys ' in his office, depriving himself regularly of dinner, and walking in the snow so nearly barefoot that a stranger whose boot store he had entered to ask for a subscription to the Work, presented him with a pair of snow-shoes instead.

But his reward began when, two months later, a saloon-keeper in St. Louis was carrying chairs out into the street for the use of the ' Hallelujah Lasses,' and a band of Christian ladies united to see that the women-Officers wanted for nothing, so well had this contingent of The Salvation Army won its way.

CHAPTER IX

The Recall from America

'There is nothing more painful to The Salvation Army Officer than to have to go away from the people to whom all his life has been for a time devoted, in order to take up a new post.'—From 'The Life of Lieut.-Colonel Jacob Junker,' by G. S. R.

MEANTIME things had moved rapidly on the other side the Atlantic. Commissioner Railton's modest foundation-stone was already being built upon. Closely following the opening of the United States came calls from other lands that were as manifestly Divine and urgent as the Saviour's command, 'Go ye forth,' and therefore to be perforce answered. Railton's presence was increasingly needed in England, and he had already received several letters from Headquarters on the subject.

The thought of being recalled at such a moment gave him inexpressible distress; and although he seldom referred to it, this period was undoubtedly one of the testing times of his life. On every hand the work in the States was developing, and the seed planted with such sacrifice and labour beginning to spring up.

His 'illustrated' description of the old factory in New York City, where they opened fire, shows how firmly his work had twined itself around his heart:

'We turn with no small regret from the dear old birth-place of The Army in America. Only the necessity of enlarging our accommodation and securing a place capable of enduring use during the hot months could reconcile us to change, and even then we should certainly try to retain the old spot as well if we thought the expenditure profit-

able. But we cannot afford to pay for veneration at present, and so I trust you will be able to preserve in "The War Cry" a visible memorial of the old spot, for which purpose I enclose a sketch or two.

'I propose to write much more fully about the dear old place and its memories some day (when I have time!). My sketch of the interior represents it as it appeared at the first Services before the floor and other wood-work had been put in, in the brave days when bricks used to be thrown through the windows, and lads used to parade the roof and throw dogs, etc., through the skylights, when rats ran about, and the daylight showed abundantly through walls as well as roof.

'I cannot artistically represent the irregular nearly-flat roof and its rafters, nor the unboarded floor, nor the little first patch of boarding provided for the special use of saints and penitents, nor the few rows of chairs and the general assembly of unbacked benches, with which, as they prospered, the first Corps gradually provided themselves.

'But, Oh, may we always conquer as they conquered on that spot, for which I confess I feel more attachment than for any in the Old World. But an army must have no local attachments, I suppose. "Forward." God help us! May we never forget where we were raised!'

To leave America after so short a stay would appear to mean the shipwreck, humanly speaking, of his hopes. From a voluminous correspondence at the time we can see how earnestly and with what skill he sought to stave off the impending blow.

We must remember that the Commissioner was at this time terribly alone. He had absolutely no one with whom he could confer; so far, indeed, from making personal friends he had remained purposely an unknown quantity; for, to use his own words:

'Those that come in contact with me feel that I stand all alone, the survivor of the backwoods, and whilst I make every effort to encourage the idea that there is nothing particular about me, I keep a kindly distance *up*, and they feel there is never any knowing what I'll do next.

'I must keep on till I have myself become an admitted

conqueror here,' he writes. 'My visit to Europe will then help not merely The Army generally, but me also, and then returning, I must go on.

'Just so I am convinced must *some* person do for each nation. That is the true Divine military programme. That is how to crown Him King of kings and Lord of lords. There is only one way to that here—to begin at the foot of the ladder and climb up to the top, and then all the nation says "Bully for you!" Having undertaken the biggest task on earth we have got to pay the needful price. But when it's done, then let's discuss where I shall go next. . . .'

Before he could receive a reply to this letter, and right in the middle of his St. Louis Campaign, came the decisive cable, 'Must have you here.'

An extract from one of his answering letters shows his feelings:

'We are all, no doubt, outrageously overtaxed and had no idea—though God had—what it would amount to. But the simple truth is we cannot gain the apostolic results we desire without the apostolic price. We are paying the price in full, I firmly believe, and if so, God cannot fail to supply all our need. He satisfied me yesterday that no matter what floods of anguish and shame we might have to go through, He would keep us up, and give us according to our faith after it all. It is not according to our strength or our wisdom or our ability, or even our efforts, but according to our faith.

'I hope you will not fancy I am preaching this to you, for you have always been much more patient than I was. I am just telling you the lesson I got here all alone yesterday morning so that you may understand how I can be so hard-hearted as to grasp in your letter an assurance that I may dismiss all calculations of return and plan accordingly. . . .'

However, on the first day of the New Year a further cable arrived, a death-knell to his hopes. It was brief, two words only, 'Come alone.'

We have no record of the struggle which must have followed the receipt of that cable. His work in America was pulling hard at his heart. How could

he apparently 'abandon' his little flock beset by debt and difficulty on every hand? But Commissioner Railton did not preach one thing and practise another. He accepted what he felt must be, in spite of his own suffering, the Will of God, and he set out on the journey West that was to end in London and an office life, with only scraps of time for his dearly-loved soul-saving campaigns thrown in.

While crossing the Mississippi on his way back to New York his heart found expression in some lines which he wrote, and which will ever live among Salvation Army songs, the outcome of his own soul-experience under one of the greatest disappointments of his life.

TUNE—'A life on the ocean wave.'
 No home on earth have I,
 No nation owns my soul;
 My dwelling-place is the Most High,
 I'm under His control;
 O'er all the earth alike
 My Father's grand domain,
 Each land and sea with Him I like;
 O'er all He yet shall reign.

No spot on earth I own,
 No field, no house be mine;
 Myself, my all, I still disown,
 My God, let all be Thine!
 Into Thy gracious hands
 My life is ever placed:
 To die fulfilling Thy commands
 I march with bounding haste.

With Thee, my God, is home;
 With Thee is endless joy;
 With Thee in ceaseless rest I roam,
 With Thee, can death destroy?
 With Thee, the east, the west,
 The north, the south, are one;
 The battle's front I love the best,
 And yet—'Thy will be done!'

Later, and before sailing, he wrote again, giving once more his reasons for desiring to remain:

'Now, of course, as I said before, I repeat, no conceivable circumstances could be of importance as compared

with your health, and rather than risk a breakdown of any of you, I can come gladly, however terrible consequences it may produce as to this Army. . . .’

After carefully showing why he felt he ought to stay, he goes on :

‘ The spiritual tide is rising every hour, and the real life these all represent is only a question of time. It is the chance of a generation. . . . The West, and by it the States, will be in our power in 1881, whereas my going away now would shake their expectation as to us, and injure us perhaps irreparably. . . .’

‘ If indeed I *must* go, I should hope it will be only for a while and then back. Do not let us be short-sighted. There is no comparison between the grandeur of your present work and mine. . . . It is a mercy the telegram came to St. Louis, and therefore has been seen by no one as yet.

‘ RAILTON.’

‘ Don’t think this or anything else will disturb me. It can only at worst be another case of “ he that loseth his life for My sake,” and I seem to have more lives than a cat—a deal.—R.’

But The General had missed his Secretary greatly, and felt that his services would be of most value to the world if he were in London. So, amid much lamentation and heartfelt regret on the part of Officers and friends, Railton said good-bye to America and turned a hopeful face eastward.

On reaching London he quickly became submerged in work. The next months were as busy and full as their predecessors, though of a different character. The Army was spreading to many distant lands, and office work, Meetings, and occasional visits to France, Switzerland, and Sweden pretty well filled his time. Had he been at all of an ambitious nature, or, to be strictly correct, had his ambitions not been fully sanctified, he might easily have diverged here from the straight and simple path he had hitherto trodden.

The Headquarters of The Army had been moved from Whitechapel to the business centre of Queen

Victoria Street, and the whole Movement was fast coming into prominence. George Scott Railton, as friend and confidential secretary, was second only to The General and his family as far as rank and influence went. He could easily have magnified his position and made a 'big man' of himself. He was young, with an attractive, magnetic personality, a peculiarly courteous and an exceedingly kind-hearted, sympathetic nature. His ability was unquestioned, his advice upon all matters in constant request. The temptation to 'seek great things' for oneself, even in connexion with philanthropic and religious work, is as old as mankind and as blighting to the Christ-life of the soul as is late frost to tender blossoms. But the struggle, if indeed it ever existed, remained sacred to his own soul and his God.

Notwithstanding his position and the increasing 'care of the tables' he grew, if anything, sweeter and more humbly dependent upon God than ever. His greatest joy was to help a fellow-comrade in a tight place, and he took an almost boyish delight in 'coming to the rescue.' He had a Divine instinct in tracking down the discouraged and hard pressed.

The present Mrs. Commissioner Ridsdel, then Mrs. Major Mobley, who was 'holding on' at Luton during her husband's illness, will never forget one such visit. She says :

'It was the time of a split in the early Eighties. There was a rival army marching out every time. *They* had the crowds, I had only the 'faithful few.' It was very hard, money was scarce, and—well, we did not feel like giving up, but we felt down, down, down !

'One night as we marched our tiny handful out, we met the big crowd of roughs out, too, in full force. We went on singing, but there was no heart in it. Suddenly "R." appeared at our head. He must have come down a side lane, but it seemed to me he dropped straight from Heaven ! He was in radiant spirits and his face shone. He led us up the street singing and shouting "Hallelujah !" We all felt in a minute that we should win. He seemed to rejoice

with us as victors. We turned into our Hall—he had to go on his way, but it didn't matter; we never knew how he did it, but we felt as if an angel had strengthened us, and we never lost courage again!

A maid where he was once staying just about this time says:

‘He came into the kitchen one day to cheer me up, and I asked him if he could keep as well saved up there in London with such a high title as he could when lower down. I can feel the grip of his hand now as he looked earnestly into my face and told me how thankful he was to be able to testify to a Full Salvation “even up there.” Instead of being annoyed at my audacity he thanked me for asking him, “for,” said he, “I am always asking others how they are and nobody ever asks me!”’

Another little struggling soul remembers a morning when none of the family were down for prayers. Of course the maid thought there would not be any,

‘But would you think it, he actually had prayers with *me* alone! He prayed and read the Bible, explaining it as he went along, as though there were a roomful. As I was going out he called me back, and I shall never forget how he talked to me, nor the look on his face as he said, “Let your life be like a looking-glass, so that people may see the Christ-life reflected in you!”’

But such instances are too numerous to mention in the pages of one small volume.

CHAPTER X

Engagement and Marriage

'We do solemnly declare that we have not sought this marriage for the sake of our own happiness and interests only, although we hope these will be furthered thereby, but because we believe that the union will enable us better to please and serve God, and more earnestly and successfully to fight and work in The Salvation Army.'—Inserted in The Salvation Army Marriage Service at the suggestion of G. S. R.

WHEN George Scott Railton had spent eleven years of evangelistic work of a kind so incessant that he was believed never to have taken one day's holiday, some of his friends and fellow-workers received the surprise of their lives. 'Railton was going to be married!'

He had often startled them by the unexpected, but for this announcement they were entirely unprepared. He had seemed a man so apart that a multiplicity of queries at once arose: How did he find time to become engaged? How could he expect any woman to share such a life as his?

But whatever impressions existed about him he was in reality no mere ascetic. His lonely youth had appeared far from ideal, and the memory of his mother made the very thought of home sacred and blessed.

The chosen bride was Marianne Parkyn, an only daughter who had been surrounded with every comfort in her home in Torquay. She was a frail-looking girl, apparently needing to be shielded from everything approaching hardship or discomfort. Her parents had the Victorian ideas as to what should promote the happiness and welfare of a daughter, and delighted to

surround her with all that love and money could procure. Nothing protected her from an entirely selfish life but the fact that her mother was a constant invalid. The sufferings of this precious patient were intense, and lasted for sixteen years. A nurse and a companion were always in attendance, but Mrs. Parkyn clung more and more to Marianne, who studied nursing and unflinchingly endured the agony of witnessing the gradual weakening of her idolized mother.

When death parted them Marianne turned to work of a religious kind outside her home. As long as this was of the respectable Sunday-school sort her father did not object. Unfortunately, from his point of view, she undertook some district visiting in a very bad part of the town, and was at once plunged into the problems caused by drunkenness and vice. To her father's indignation and distress he found that she spent her time among girls of a certain class, and actually herself opened a Rescue Home. In reply to his strong objections she induced Miss Ellice Hopkins, then at the height of her long struggle with the social question, to come to Torquay. An 'Association for the Care of Friendless Girls' was launched, with Marianne as its secretary, and her father's mind became more at rest. The Association was joined by many experienced women of position in Torquay, with Lady Mount-Temple as its President, and Mr. Parkyn felt that his daughter, though engaged in a most painful task, was not alone or unsupported.

The work grew, and both a Rescue and a Preventive Home were opened with much apparent success. But Marianne was not satisfied with the results gained. To her the girls did not appear to be radically changed—their reformation was fleeting.

We need not stay to tell how she embarked on a career as a public speaker—not so usual for women in those days—and became in demand as a Temperance lecturer, or a leader of missions in the neighbouring towns. These were all steps in the path which led her to The Salvation Army and to the point where her

life — hitherto so widely different — might unite with Railton's.

It was in a mood of much dissatisfaction with herself and her work that Marianne paid a visit to her brother in Kensington, and there heard from some friends about The Salvation Army. She was led to attend the Meetings, and at once became convinced that their methods succeeded where the attempts of many others failed. Ought she not also to become a Salvationist?

Months of mental conflict followed in which she had the violent and continued opposition of her father as well as of her friends and fellow-workers.

Nevertheless, she induced The Salvation Army to begin its work in Torquay, where the usual phenomena of that day followed. The entire force of police could hardly regulate the crowds, and the town was stirred. In a fortnight some two thousand people professed conversion, many among them the very worst, whose reformation had long been despaired of.

To Marianne there seemed no doubt but that God intended her to work among these people. She went to London, and in an All-Night of Prayer surrendered herself completely to do God's will among the ranks of those He was so honouring.

From her father's point of view this was an act of absolute insanity almost justifying her being placed under restraint. His very love for her made him the more violently unreasonable, and without meaning to be unkind his incessant opposition amounted to persecution. He raised such determined objections to General Booth's suggestion that Miss Parkyn should come to London and help his daughter in training Salvation Army Cadets that The Founder advised her to wait patiently, taking no action for the moment. She was given the charge of a Home for sick Officers in Torquay, and so a few months passed away. Her path still seemed hopelessly blocked.

About this time Railton returned from America, and an Officer mentioned him casually to Miss Parkyn.

'I do not know him,' she said. The reply was prompt. 'Then you do not know The Salvation Army. Promise me you will hear him at the first opportunity.'

Miss Parkyn was soon once more in London, and noticing that Railton was to lead an All-Night of Prayer in Woolwich she remembered her promise, and decided to be present. The Corps was out on a march when she entered the Hall at 10 p.m., and only an old caretaker was there who observed, as the stranger took her seat, 'I suppose you are the Commissioner's missis?'

This surmise — prophetic as it turned out to be — naturally left the impression on Miss Parkyn's mind that Railton was a married man.

A popular Major, once a music-hall actor, took the lion's share of the All-Night, Railton merely making a few deeply spiritual remarks, and spending the rest of his time in talking to the penitents. Until the return journey Miss Parkyn had not been specially impressed, but when she got into a railway carriage with him and other Officers she remembers that, 'I noticed him especially when he fell asleep. He looked so thin, worn, and intellectual, singularly apart from the others.' As she was alone he walked part of the way home with her, and seized the opportunity of suggesting that she ought to write for 'The War Cry.'

Nearly a year passed, and then circumstances led to their meeting on several occasions, and even finding themselves during a special campaign staying in the same house.

Railton never found time for 'courting,' and Miss Parkyn did not realize his feelings, though one wise old Officer had been astute enough to point her out privately to a comrade—Lieut.-Colonel Roberts—as 'the future Mrs. Railton.' But when the Commissioner finally declared his love he met with the response he desired. 'An extraordinary affection came into our hearts,' she said thirty years later. 'I almost worshipped him. I never thought that any human being

could be like him. I know no two people who were nearer to each other than we.' There was just one flaw, as there often is in the most precious of gifts—she felt that 'he was so absolutely determined to kill himself with over-work.'

Now that the old miracle of two human hearts made one had taken place, a difficulty still stood in the way of their love running smoothly. Mr. Parkyn clung very closely to his only daughter, and in his age and loneliness could neither endure to spare her nor contemplate her life lived among what he designated as 'those outrageous people.' He had always refused to see any Salvationist, so that no one could approach him, but he finally agreed to an interview with Railton.

His daughter never knew what passed in the hour which the two men spent together. But the result was definite. Her father was delighted with his future son-in-law, and said: 'He must, of course, come out of The Salvation Army. He is in his wrong place entirely. I will provide you both with a charming home and an adequate income.' This was the decision. But to his disappointment Mr. Parkyn found this solution of the difficulty gently but finally set aside, for Railton was seeking in his wife one who would also be, in the language of The Army Marriage Service, 'his continual comrade in the War.'

Miss Parkyn received many comments and suggestions from friendly outsiders at this time, and remembers one incident which illustrates the impression made by Railton upon men of no religion. A distinguished old scientist, who lived in Torquay, sent her an imperative request that she would call upon him. She did so, supposing that he wanted to subscribe to the funds. He met her with an abrupt question, 'I hear you are to marry Railton. I ask you, *What have you ever done that you should marry such a man?*' Then fixing a very stern glance upon her he said, 'Let me tell you, that man is absolutely unique. I am not religious, and I study men from a psychological point of view only. I went to see The Salvation Army, and

I found a man for whom I have a profound admiration, and whom I consider as one in a generation. Well, come into my study and I will give you some hints.'

Among other things he said to her, 'You cannot come along at this time of life and alter Railton. Some of you women think you are going to change a man and twist him round your finger. But if you try it you will make him very unhappy and yourself too. Follow him and never twist him. It is not going to be a smooth life for you.'

Meanwhile Railton himself was perfectly happy.

In reply to a letter of congratulation from his old friend Lieut.-Colonel Roberts, who had written not long before announcing his own marriage, he writes :

'Thanks for your very kind and welcome letter. I am already, I think, finding out the good of this engagement in opening up communication with comrades I have loved in my own silent, reserved way for years, and whom I fear I have not helped as I might have done with sympathy, for the want of knowing how.

'I am doubly pleased with yours, because you are, I fancy, the first person to whom the idea was broached a year ago, though I had not the least hope then of getting her! I thought she would be offended and most likely retire to her own circle.

'I have never had any sympathy with the celibate theory, and rejoice always to hear of a good Army match.

'By the way, you might have told us for our encouragement how you found it so far with "the little girl who never gave her parents an anxious thought," but I suppose you thought it quite needless to remark upon your indescribable happiness!

'Be assured that I marry with a view to more than redoubled fighting. So don't suppose I am going to be trained into a domestic animal. We must be lions and tigers more than ever!'

In spite of his assuring Mrs. Booth in a letter that 'We are both, I think, completely "gone" and "matched,"' The Army Mother, fearful that this all-

important matter was not getting due consideration, wrote begging Miss Parkyn to come and visit them in London. 'Then you will be able to see more of him,' she said.

The invitation was accepted, but notwithstanding all Mrs. Booth could do or say, 'seeing more of him' proved a vain hope.

Many important questions had arisen in the course of the week at Headquarters, and The General and his Secretary were entirely absorbed. They were not usually home before ten o'clock at night, and then The General would say, 'Come, Railton, we really must get these letters off,' and it was often past midnight before either of them had finished work or found leisure for social intercourse.

At last Railton said, 'It is of no use, we shall never get any time together. But I think we know enough of each other. If you can trust me, I can trust you.' And she, with the utmost confidence and faith, answered, 'Yes, I can trust you.'

In ten weeks from the time of their engagement they were married. During their courtship they wrote each other daily. It was his proposal that they should read the Psalms together. Each day he sent her his comments, so characteristic and original that if in some respects Marianne Parkyn knew little about the man she was marrying, she had, through this medium, a deep insight into his spiritual life, and every day their love became a more sacred and holy treasure.

The day before the wedding the Commissioner spent at the Whitechapel Corps. A Cadet Sergeant, now a Staff Officer, who was with him, has a lively remembrance of the occasion. He says:

'The Commissioner led us into the lowest, narrowest, dirtiest streets and alleys of Whitechapel! We were heartily cursed by vile-looking men and women whose drunken slumbers we had broken. We were jeered at by loafers and "drunks" looking for a surreptitious drink, and even mocked at by the little gutter-snipes! But every

curse and sneer was responded to by the Commissioner with a "Hallelujah!"

'This was not all. Lumps of mud, rotten eggs, and brick-bats were thrown at us; one handful of mud struck the Commissioner on the side of the face and eye, almost blinding him; but none of those things moved him. At every blow he shouted, "Another mark for Jesus!" and went on talking and singing and marching as if nothing had happened until we reached the Hall. . . . We finished with souls seeking God at the mercy-seat, of course.'

The Regulation that the prospective bride of an Officer must have first independent Officership herself had not then been made. Commissioner Railton was therefore married to Sergeant Marianne Parkyn, on January 17, 1884. The marriage ceremony of The Salvation Army, which includes special vows, was conducted by The General in the old Exeter Hall, where an immense crowd had assembled, attracted by the novel Service. The now well-known wedding song of The Army, 'There's a golden day,' with its chorus,

Oh, I'm glad I'm ready!
Ready with the wedding garment on!

was composed by one of The General's sons in honour of this event and sung for the first time.

The General took advantage of the occasion to testify to his Secretary's boundless devotion to himself and to the work, and the 'I will' of the Marriage Service became the Commissioner's text for an address on consecration, in which he urged all present to answer 'I will' to God's demand for their services.

Probably both on that day and in the future years it may have been said that Railton ought never to have married, since he was not prepared to anticipate an ordinary home life. Or, again, both he and his wife may have shared that criticism of being 'cold-blooded' and 'indifferent,' which is often mercilessly bestowed upon those both inside and outside Salvation Army ranks, who agree to long separations so that 'the work be not hindered.' Certain it is that both the Commis-

sioner and his bride took the vows in The Army Marriage Service very literally :—

‘ We promise, whether together or apart, always to do our utmost as true Soldiers of Jesus Christ. . . . ’

‘ Should either of us, from sickness, death, or any other cause cease to be efficient Soldiers, we engage that the remaining one shall continue to the best of his or her ability to fulfil these promises. ’

That the long separations involved by her husband’s work were a heavy cross to Mrs. Railton is not to be denied. But both accepted these partings as a ‘ part of the contract ’ which never lessened their perfect union of heart nor their confident delight in each other’s love.

It is characteristic of Commissioner Railton that he changed the Christian as well as the surname of his wife on her wedding-day. In her own home she had always been known as ‘ Marianne,’ but during the engagement he remarked that it was ‘ too fine for a Salvationist. ’

‘ Unfortunately, I am loaded with three other names,’ she answered—‘ Deborah, Lydia, and Ellen. ’

‘ Capital ! ’ exclaimed the Commissioner. ‘ We’ll have “ Deborah ” for The Army and “ Nellie ” for my own private name for you ; as for Lydia—it’s too mild for anything. ’

The General desired Railton to spend his ten days’ honeymoon in complete rest, but the arrangements were naturally left for him to make.

‘ I have a great fancy to accept an invitation that has been sent me from an old fellow, a Felixstowe pilot. I expect it will be very simple,’ he announced to his fiancée, who consented willingly.

They reached Felixstowe on a chilly, dark winter’s evening. A fine old sailor met them with a rough pony and trap, and drove them four miles to a little bit of beach upon which stood a few houses, in one of which he and his wife lived.

The tiny cottage was spotlessly clean, but so small that obviously they must share the home life of the

old couple, and the hope of that blessed 'solitude of two' for which they had longed was at an end.

But from Mrs. Railton's point of view worse was to follow. Already the certainty that her beloved must soon break down unless she could prevail on him to rest, lay heavy on her heart. The conversation at their first meal was a death-knell to her hopes of quiet, for she instantly discovered why they had been so earnestly invited.

'You won't mind taking a Meeting to-morrow night,' asked the old man, adding apologetically, 'because we have announced you.'

And so, before breakfast next morning visitors from the neighbouring villages arrived to see the strange new people. Every evening brought a fresh set eager to be talked to and prayed with and helped. Many gave their hearts to God in that tiny cottage kitchen, and are still serving Him to-day.

'We couldn't get away from them,' Mrs. Railton recalls. 'If we went for a walk together people followed us because they wanted to be converted. They came to the cottage early and late; and we had to go and hold Meetings in the neighbouring villages, too!'

The bride's disappointment was acute. She had counted on these ten precious days as a time of complete relaxation, instead of which her husband was working all day. But to him it was heaven on earth, that honeymoon!

'Don't worry, dear,' was his cheerful reply to all her remonstrances. 'Don't worry—it is such a lovely beginning to a married life!'

But if this kind of honeymoon left them little time alone it was an opportunity for the new wife to learn her husband's idea of Army work. The tiny chapel, with its countryside congregation, gave him the chance to begin matters on his own foundation.

'It took me quite a long time to realize that his plans were different from other people's,' she says. 'I had considerable experience of missions outside The Army and of successful Corps work within its ranks. But at Felixstowe

I began to learn something new. I fancied that we were there to instruct the people, and so, partly to save his strength and partly because I was accustomed to take a leading part, I was eager to do a large share of the speaking. But I was soon disillusioned.

"You see," he would say, "we are only here for a few days, and I want to leave something solid behind. I must train these people to carry on the work themselves. They must not want The Salvation Army to come: they must *be* The Army."

To this end he kept them much in prayer, until these old Methodist Christians, who had almost ceased to speak about religion, were in a spiritual glow. Then he made them speak in their simple way, and more people than ever came to hear the Pilot's wife. When he was not teaching the people to speak he was drilling them to pray.

'Of course,' she adds, 'in future days I found that he allowed us both to use our own speaking as a means to an end. But always he would say, "We are here first to make Soldiers, and no Sunday is a success that has only professed conversions. Let us always aim at leaving some new thing behind, such as a Public-house Visiting Brigade or a band of women who have begun to speak." How often for this reason he disappointed people who came to hear him! I never ceased to think that he carried this to an extreme, but I soon learned not to feel snubbed, as I had done, I confess, on the first occasion at Felixstowe, when he told me, "You can keep the door or help at the penitent-form."'

Railton's future home gave him very little anxiety. 'Are you in a hurry for a house and to begin all that domestic bother?' he asked casually one day at Felixstowe. Experience had not taught Mrs. Railton much as yet. The honeymoon arrangements were a mere accident, and as for housekeeping she knew absolutely nothing about it. Her duty at home had been to make her family happy, and her expectation now was to devote herself to her husband and his work.

He looked relieved when she appeared willing to leave the matter to him. 'I'll tell them to take a

couple of rooms for us somewhere,' he said, and after writing a letter to London, dismissed the matter.

As the result of these vague instructions, rooms were secured in the region of Clapton, and on their arrival, as he surveyed their new home, he evidently felt his cup of joy to be full.

But the bride had some consternation to conceal. Could they really exist in such cramped quarters? What would her relations say on finding her in such surroundings? Then she remembered that he had arranged for the rooms, and she resolved not by word or look to disappoint him.

If the knowledge that for the next year Mrs. Railton made her husband as happy as it is possible for mortal man to be on this earth, was sufficient reward for all the privations and discomforts she bore silently and cheerfully, that reward was hers. As long as he lived he always referred to 'that happy year when you never left me,' and loved to look back and dwell on its every detail.

'We were very, very happy,' she says. She took down his letters, and was his private secretary, his comrade in everything. At this time Railton was the Editor of the bi-weekly 'War Cry,' and his wife quickly became a valuable assistant. Together they attended Meetings, and 'specialled' for out-of-town Corps at the week-ends. Her joy would have been as full as his but for the conviction, 'I *know* you cannot keep it up,' that he was working towards a serious breakdown. But though she often pointed it out to Mrs. Booth or The Founder, they were both working at more than high pressure themselves, and 'R.' was not easy to influence.

A short visit paid by his wife to her father during that first summer was quite a cross to the Commissioner.

'When I realize how I miss you,' he wrote, 'it makes me wonder if we feel as we should to the Lord. It is always having Him with us perhaps that makes less of that. I have been asking God to help us always to run after Jesus just as if He were newly manifested. . . . The

General came for me at 8.40 this evening, and as neither of us had a wife we just went on as we liked.

'We went up to Rookwood Road, and I read him the foreign papers* even after he was in bed, and then he kept all the papers, which he read during the night, having had a very bad one, while I slept like a top in the next room. I was tempted to sit up and write my article, but did not feel as if it would be right, as I was very tired. The General says I must go to him again to-night, as what is the use of my going home when you are away? . . .'

Even Meetings, the most 'celestial,' would not fill the blank caused by her absence, and he writes :

'I do not know if I told you enough about Scarborough. The afternoon was well worth stopping for. There were magistrates there, as I afterwards heard, and a real, solid, sensible, eager audience that it just seemed celestial to talk straight to, and some testimonies and time for me to have my fling, and then such proper, deliberate, clean surrendering.† Oh, but you did miss it! What did you go for?'

After her return to London and home a visit to Bristol and Bath was arranged in which they were to hold three days' Meetings and Officers' Councils.

'I have fixed a Sunday for you, Commissioner, just after your own heart!' was the enthusiastic greeting that awaited them on the Saturday evening at Bristol Station. Mrs. Railton's heart sank.

'We start at six in the morning,' the Major continued in a tone of triumph, 'with a Meeting till seven, outdoor Meeting till eight, indoor Meeting till nine, and so on alternately all day. You are not to go in for meals all day, Commissioner.'

'How about food?' inquired Mrs. Railton.

'Oh, we'll have some sandwiches and eat as we go,' was the somewhat vague answer.

Mrs. Railton was in despair, but gave in to her husband's whispered plea, 'Don't say anything to stop him!'

* 'War Crys' of the different lands where The Army was at work.

† Railton's way of describing entire consecration to the will of God.

Not content with this full programme, an Open-Air Meeting from seven till nine in the Horse Market finished up with a Half-Night of Prayer in the Circus. Coming home from this at 2 a.m. they were drenched to the skin by an unexpected shower. The Commissioner was chilled through long before they had walked the mile to their lodgings.

He slept till morning, when he greeted her with, 'You see, my dear, I am all right. You are so unbelieving! We are going to have a grand day at Bath.'

Accordingly, all day Officers' Councils and a large Meeting at night followed, and apparently the Commissioner was much better. But the next day as the train drew near London he became very ill.

With difficulty he reached his office at Headquarters, and was discovered lying across his table almost unconscious. By the end of the week he was worse, and the doctors pronounced him to be suffering from a most serious breakdown. Even his extraordinary strength had succumbed at last, and he never regained his early vigour.

CHAPTER XI

‘Blank Years’

‘Not he that succeeds to the end, but he that endureth to the end, shall be saved. Let all your efforts, your self-denials, your sacrifices, your life itself, be lost to all appearance. God has said you shall reap in due season. Be satisfied.’—G. S. R., 1873.

GEORGE SCOTT RAILTON was a young man not yet twenty-four years old when he penned the above. He was then in the heyday of youthful vigour and enthusiasm, enjoying to the full the peculiar and satisfying joy that accompanies successful work. Now he was to prove the truth of those words himself.

The next few years were to be spent in endurance, years in which he would sometimes not only have to go slowly, but to drop out altogether. The natural George Railton would have fretted and chafed and, perhaps, lost his soul’s anchorage in a perpetual ‘Why?’ But the spiritual man accepted his lot as God’s mysterious will for him, and instead of indulging in self-pity or vain regrets, was content during ‘those blank years,’ as he called them later, to do what he could.

His wife’s careful nursing restored him to a measure of strength; but no sooner did his health improve than he would insist on going back to his work at Headquarters, and another collapse would follow.

After two months passed in this unsatisfactory manner, he had the joy of welcoming the arrival of a little son, whom he named David after the Psalmist King. But this new member of the family added a

fresh perplexity. The doctors now recommended for Railton a long voyage on a sailing ship which should touch at no port of call, thus isolating him from all temptation to work for many months.

Mrs. Railton must have found the choice difficult; she had either to leave her baby son, or to allow her husband to travel alone. But it was easier to procure care for an infant than to provide Railton in his critical condition with a suitable companion, and she felt no doubt as to the right decision.

On January 1, 1885, therefore, they sailed for Natal, entering the second year of wedded life under most unexpected circumstances.

The sailing ship proved scarcely larger than a yacht, and though a seaworthy and delightful little craft, with a careful captain, they soon found the isolation to be inconveniently complete. They were thirteen on board, all told—the captain, his two mates, a crew of eight sailors, and they themselves the only passengers.

Railton's weakness increased daily, and his wife found herself greatly perplexed, with no doctor at hand, no food except that of the plainest and roughest description, and no books or comforts of any kind with which to beguile the ten long weeks which the voyage occupied.

A morning interview with the old Dane who was steward and cook in one, sometimes added a welcome change to the meagre fare. But, except for this practical benefit, Mrs. Railton says that she felt more cheerful when having no dealings with him, for he generally closed the conversation with the same mournful remark, 'Oh, your poor gentleman ought never to have come on our ship. He's exactly like one who came out with us on my first voyage, and who died the day after we landed!'

That Railton did not meet with a similar fate seemed to his wife largely due to his cheerful serenity. He suffered tortures from indigestion because of the unsuitable food, and often became so low that his

'BLANK YEARS'



pulse could not be felt. The sudden change from a life stirring and active grew also intensely trying to his mind, and to be deprived of papers and books was a great trial. Yet he never fretted. He took an interest in every sailor, and listened to the tales or 'grousing' of each one with unfailing patience. The men appeared to have means of getting at some drink in the cargo far more freely than was good for them, and Railton often repeated in later years the answer which the ship's carpenter invariably made to his remonstrances: "'Tis all right, sir. When I've had a drop too much I goes to bed, and I just says, "Now, God, you see I am drunk, so take care of me."'

The Commissioner's own pleasures on this voyage consisted in watching the wonderful sunsets and sun-rises, and in listening to his wife reading the Bible. He did not care for separate chapters, but enjoyed a Book read through at a time.

Mrs. Railton found some chessmen on board, but could not prevail on him to play, though both would have enjoyed a game. 'The men are sure to think we are playing a betting game,' he said; adding, with an unusual touch of bitterness, 'If I can do no good, at least let me do no harm.'

When they anchored outside the Bar at Durban port, officials came on board to take the captain's notes of the voyage. Railton turned to his wife and said quietly, 'There would certainly have been a record of one death had you not been here.' His words rewarded her for all she had felt at leaving her little son in England.

They arrived at Durban on a Sunday, and, by Mrs. Railton's decision, out of uniform. There were as yet no Salvationists in Natal Colony, her dismay can therefore be understood, when at their first meal on shore she overheard a man remark to his friend, 'So The Salvation Army has landed here to-day! What will "Happy Sarah" be like?'

But they were unrecognized, and Mrs. Railton secured the quietest rooms to be found on the Berea,

in which to continue the difficult task of keeping her husband inactive.

For a time the Commissioner meekly acquiesced and agreed to remain unknown. She scarcely noticed his talking quietly to the little maid who waited on them, but was reminded of it years later when the girl herself wrote saying that the Commissioner's words had been the means of her conversion, and that she was now an Officer in The Salvation Army.

Even lessons in the Zulu language did not keep him long content, and one day he noticed in the papers an account of some Revival Meetings in Pietermaritzburg. A few days later he gleefully informed his wife that he had written to the pastor offering to help.

'But you *know* you can't work!' she exclaimed in dismay. 'Yes,' he replied unmoved, 'I told him so—but that my wife could. We can't both stay here idle!' he added apologetically.

His offer was gladly accepted, but the journey to Pietermaritzburg proved a very trying one, and an extract from a letter to London gives us an insight into his feelings:

'To travel is to be jogged from one uninteresting spot to another, keeping me in suffering whatever else happens. Not to travel is to stagnate and sit reading, then to drift into conversational and other work and generally to become more and more pained with the state of things. To have to live neither able to rest nor to work is a funny fate.

'Perhaps I should be thankful to be just kept above the ground thus until better days come. To be nearer The Army would undoubtedly excite and trouble me more, or oftener, so that I should run down constantly to the extreme of prostration which I keep off at present. And I should be a continual trouble and worry to others *instead of only to the one who never seems troubled or tired.*'

At Pietermaritzburg the pastor lent Mrs. Railton his chapel, which was quickly crowded to hear a woman-Salvationist speaker. Amongst the listeners was a missionary who cordially invited the Commis-

sioner and his wife to come and stay with him so that Mrs. Railton might hold Meetings for his Zulu people with the aid of an interpreter. Railton was delighted. He felt the keenest interest at being in a Colony of nominally Christian natives, surrounded by kraals full of heathen.

Writing of a Zulu Chapel Meeting addressed by his wife, he graphically describes the wailing of the Zulus, especially of the women, when under conviction of sin in the Prayer Meeting, as being ‘more like the lost in Hell than anything one can imagine.’

‘After enjoying the scene for ten minutes, as I could not do anything, and wanted a good night’s sleep, if possible, I went to the Mission House. But there the sound was beyond anything I had heard since the roar of the crowd outside the Grecian* on the opening day, and yet there were not three hundred of them all told!’

That he fully realized the difficulty of uplifting the native races, the following extract from a letter to The General shows:

‘I have little hope of any one having sympathy or sense enough to deal with the African peoples. Of course, they are, to a great extent, like children, and must be saved and resaved as often as they tumble, and gently cared for and watched over in an entirely different way to any of our English Corps who have a ready-made ideal of a saint.’

But, Railton-like, he wanted his own people to try their hand at the task, and found some weeks of happy occupation in making all arrangements for a successful opening in Natal. A small detachment of three Officers was sent from Cape Colony, and he had the joy of welcoming them, boarding—according to a pre-arranged agreement with his wife—a home-ward-bound steamer the next day.

He was still far, however, from being restored to his usual health, but felt too anxious to be in England and of service to The General to consent to any further absence. Baby David, also, though he had

*The notorious low theatre in the City Road, London, attached to the ‘Eagle’ public-house, turned into a Salvation Army Hall in 1882.

only been acquainted with his parents for one short month, was a very powerful magnet, and one that drew them homewards at the earliest possible moment.

The last weeks in Cape Colony were spent in paying visits to various centres of Army work, meeting a few Officers and culling information for International Headquarters. Railton also found time to accept invitations from various friends.

Two ideas of the Commissioner, formulated during those weary years, have since borne much fruit. He planted the seed of what has now become 'The Salvation Army Naval and Military League,' and laid the foundation in Great Britain of The Army's Prison-Gate Work for Discharged Prisoners.

Another task in which the Commissioner found great pleasure was the compilation of a Zulu Hymn Book. He had picked up enough of the language from his Zulu boy cook in Natal to enable him to do this—after a fashion—and he was eagerly pushing on The Army's work among the Zulu settlements. This book, crude as it perforce must have been, became of real assistance at the beginning of the work in Zululand.

But his health continued to be a constant drag, and he writes in the New Year to the Chief of the Staff, the present General :

'How much sunshine your constant thoughtful kindness has imparted into our long, long winter you can never know. It is dreadful to think of your tearing about so, with so much on you, alone.'

Discussing appointments he suggests in a characteristic line :

'Why not give — his native country—capable of boundless expansion, or of comfortable repose?'

'As for myself,' he concludes, 'I am sorry to say the prospect is very poor. . . . The doctor says, though not diseased, the heart is "very uncertain" in its action, and won't have me risk going up or down stairs for a week or more.'

'Ever your old R.'

In spite of variations his strength continued to increase until one day he announced to Mrs. Railton, ‘I find I can stand office work now, and I am going back to Headquarters.’ The words fell like a weight on her heart, as she sorrowfully realized, ‘This will involve our separation.’

The year had brought another son, Nathaniel, an intensely nervous and delicate boy, needing a mother’s constant care. ‘I can’t leave this baby, if he is to live,’ she said. ‘No, not for a day! We shall be parted; you will go back to all that old life, and I shall never see you!’

Strangely enough, in none of their plans had they ever contemplated a separation. It was a sorrowful experience for both.

In spite of Railton’s previous theory, that babies ought ‘to be let loose and not coddled,’ his fatherly eye saw that this frail mite could not long exist without the special care of his mother. She had tried leaving him for short seasons, but the attempt always proved a failure. And so it came about that, except for rare intervals, their work lay apart for years.

They had planned everything so differently, had hoped always to work side by side; she his faithful, indefatigable aide-de-camp, his right hand whether in office or public work, and now one feeble pair of clinging hands had power to alter all this!

The babies of their acquaintance, as far as they could know them, were healthy, hearty specimens that slept all night and apparently laughed all day, and could either accompany their mothers or be safely left for a day or two with a trustworthy guardian. But both their own children had to be studied and watched day and night, and as for the ‘trustworthy guardian’ theory, that shared the same fate as many another of such theories! Mrs. Railton herself confesses, ‘I tried it, but we could not get the right help, and nobody did for them as I would have done myself.’

The birth of a little girl a year later shattered for ever any lurking hopes they might still have cherished,

for the first six years of baby Esther's life were a constant fight, not alone with sickness, but often with death itself.

It was not easy for husband or wife to submit and heartily to say, 'Thy will be done.' Mrs. Railton knew how unfitted he was to look after himself, the demand the work made upon his limited strength, and how oblivious he would be to its limitations were she not at hand to help and restrain. Then, too, the children would grow up without knowing him properly, it would be all 'mother.' She dreaded lest her family should become divided, and her outlook seemed dark and troubled indeed. But both realized that they must go on, each doing the duty that lay before them, and facing the situation bravely. Medical men had agreed that change of scene and travel, especially by sea, was best for the Commissioner's health. Since it was manifestly not God's will that his wife should accompany him, they would claim grace sufficient to endure separation for the Kingdom's sake.

From this time onward, we find Railton undertaking any work in any part of the world, without hesitation on the ground of home claims. And we find Mrs. Railton agreeing without a murmur to the separation.

His journeyings at first were merely short visits to the Continent, beginning with a trip to Holland.

The first edition of the French Salvation Army Song Book was far from satisfactory, and the Commissioner wrote to a friend in the south of France asking if he would revise and put the book into 'singable French.' The friend referred Railton to his brother in Amsterdam, who in turn asked that with the book some one might come who could sing the songs. This was a task within the Commissioner's powers, and he hoped at the same time to be able to fulfil another cherished project—the preparation of a Dutch Song Book for use in South Africa.

On his arrival in Amsterdam he stayed with a family named Govaars, and here he met the eldest son

(now Colonel Govaars), then a lad of nineteen, whom he enlisted at once to help him with his Dutch work. Railton found in this young man a willing, intelligent helper, and became convinced that he would make a Salvation Army Officer. The more he saw of the kindly hospitable people of the Netherlands, the more sure he felt that The Army ought to be at work there.

‘They took me to see the evangelical pastor of The Hague,’ he wrote to his wife, ‘who admitted that out of seventy thousand only seven thousand in this city went to worship. But he would not commit himself to one word about our coming. . . . Oh, I know the little woman that I should like to see enthroned in this city!’ and he adds playfully: ‘Now, having got all I want, I am going to bring Govaars back with me to-morrow—a new companion and secretary who can write in three languages and play the fiddle to me, too! So I can do just perfectly without you! Do you see?’

It is interesting to remember that Colonel Govaars was the Officer who, when Chief Secretary for Germany, nearly thirty years later, met Mrs. Railton at Cologne, and led her to where his spiritual father lay still and cold in death.

‘The Army’s first capture in Holland,’ as the Commissioner called him, went back to Holland a year later as his interpreter for the first Meetings in Amsterdam. Railton himself, though still unable to do much in public, was a great power behind the scenes. When Professor Gunning, a man of much influence in Holland, attacked The Army in ‘The Church Weekly,’ Railton wrote such a masterly reply that the Professor became one of the Salvationists’ best friends. In after days he received The Founder gladly, and his children, now scattered up and down the world, are true friends of The Army.

The Hymn Books proved most successful. The Dutch one was used at once in South Africa, and when work began in Holland, a first edition of a thousand copies—considered a sufficient supply for six months—was sold out on the first night.

The late Colonel and Mrs. Schoch were among the first, if not actually the first, friends of The Army in Holland, and the Colonel gave an interesting sidelight of those days:—

‘The Commissioner was the first Salvationist I ever met. His humility and simplicity made such an impression on us, my wife and I, that The Salvation Army found at once an open door into our hearts and home. He led the first Army Meeting in Amsterdam, which was so rough that I asked him to let the police close it. But he said:

“Let Mrs. Schoch first try to sing:

It was for me that Jesus died
On the cross of Calvary.

‘She did so, and silence followed. After this six persons came forward to the penitent-form!’

Had the Commissioner accomplished nothing beyond the pioneering of Army work in Holland during his period of semi-inaction, he might well be satisfied. But he was always pressing forward to some other possible achievement. Later it became a joke in his family that the last country he had visited was the most wonderful, full of the greatest possibilities, and ‘You must all come some day!’

Meantime the constant affection of The Founder and his son, the Chief of the Staff, together with the fact that Railton was now able to help them in their Councils, rejoiced and cheered his heart:

‘In the transactions of the last few days,’ he writes to his wife, ‘I see more than ever how they feel about me, and that makes it more endurable to be a comparative idler on the bridge, or just below it, ready to give tips. I feel less ill at ease than I have done, and will try to please you by sometimes taking rest. I want you back. I cannot get along *at all* without you!’

Urging Mrs. Railton to give up the oversight of the first Salvation Army Prison-Gate Home and Work for Men, in which she had taken the deepest interest, he writes:

‘It is true that I am not feeling so well as when you

were here, but I shall resign myself if you will give up your Prison-Gate Work and be just my little comrade.'

'What a shame it is for you to travel up alone from Torquay! But I cannot accompany you in my present condition, for it is very evident "my travelling days are done" for the present, so far as land is concerned.'

Yet later the very ill health which he deplored, and which appeared to bar his way for travelling, probably became the means in God's hands of liberating him from more sedentary work.

As the outcome of a visit to German-Switzerland, his interest became centred on Germany, and he made up his mind to study the German language. From Zurich he writes:

'This journey will do me no end of good. As for the money you sent, I shall give it away to help here, I think, just to relieve my mind of any anxiety about my bag and robbers!

'The great news is that I am in for German full speed, and am arranging for — to come to London to help me to learn the language, and at the same time to get up a German Corps. I was astonished at the facility with which I learned to give my experience and to lead choruses at the Soldiers' Meeting last night, and am confident that it would come easily enough to you too. I am delighted to think that you are getting things all so straight at home. We will soon be able to leave David, anyhow, for days together; we will rig Nat up in that Zulu holder on our backs and march.

'I slept in the bed in which Mrs. — died, and considered it a high honour. Her husband is a splendid Sergeant. Oh, The Army Sergeants, what precious, precious people they are!'

A month or so later he succeeded in gaining permission for a German-Swiss Officer and his family to be sent on an attempt to establish The Army in Berlin, and so began his close and lifelong interest in Germany.

CHAPTER XII

God's Business in Germany

'That deliverance from every thought of self-interest and from every particle of fear as to what men can do, which fits people to pass through dark and hard periods unmoved and unscared, is for every one who will seek it.'—G. S. R., 1913.

DURING the years between 1887-1894 all Commissioner Railton's available strength and time were given to The Army's work in Germany, and from 1890 he was in charge of the Territory.

He loved Germany with a deep affection; as he loved every land in which he laboured. Its militarism did not trouble him; rather he found something in the system to commend. When writing his 'Life of Lieut.-Colonel Junker,' for instance, he says:

'Our continental Officers have to undergo an experience that is quite unknown as yet to their English comrades, and which at the same time affords them opportunities such as are not possible to those who know no military service.

'To those who are at the mercy of their own passions, even the very thought of war or strife of any kind cannot but bring forth evil. But the overwhelming evidence of the Psalms, and of all the true followers of Christ who have fought valiantly in later times, shows that for sturdy faith and heroic love there cannot be found a better school than the battlefield. Whether, indeed, it would ever have been possible for the great Mr. Junker, afterwards Lieut.-Colonel Junker, Chief Secretary for Germany, to lay aside all the comforts of life and struggle with us, as he did year after year, without the physical and mental training which he had received, is very doubtful.'

His admiration, too, for many of the German homes he saw was unbounded.

'Who can hope,' he writes, 'to describe to those of any other nation the home of the German? Never, perhaps, in the world's history has there been so wonderful a mixture of the tender, affectionate ideal on the one hand, with the stern, closely-regulated practical mode of forming a household on the other.'

But we trace a sense of impending danger in these words, written sixteen years ago :

'Words cannot explain to any stranger what the youth of a well-brought-up German includes. But the product of it all, the young man—trained to careful thought and action—is making himself felt all over the world, and will surely become still more powerful, unless the abandonment of all faith destroys his higher nature and reduces him below the level of Eastern races, which may yet, perhaps, supersede a spoilt and enervated West.'

'Remember,' he said to his sons, in connexion with rough cruelty to children at the school which they attended—his family had joined him in Germany—'that while this people is ahead in organization and up-to-date living, it is undeveloped in spiritual matters, and is really a hundred years behind England in many things.'

Later, in 1910, we find his anxiety even more clearly expressed, for he writes to The Founder :

'I had always thought Germans would be so out-and-out, deep, and exact. . . . There must be, I fear, a great falling off in the nation itself through luxury and pleasure, and yet gigantic progress in every other line goes on.'

The Salvation Army's great fight in Germany in those days was not only with the population, but with the authorities, who refused to grant any liberty whatsoever. In some parts of the country no one might attend an Army Meeting without a ticket of admission, which had to be made out to its holder personally, by

the Corps Officer, before five o'clock that day. Of one such 'select' gathering in Stuttgart, Railton tells us that he 'had the pleasure of addressing an audience consisting of the Director of Police, an official of the Ministry of the Interior, a detective, two men, two women, and two boys.' He ends by saying, 'I hope they enjoyed it as much as I did!'

But the Commissioner's strong sense of justice and love of 'fair play' made him fully recognize the official point of view in these restrictions.

'Naturally enough,' he says, 'the German authorities concluded from what they had heard of riots in Switzerland, and perhaps of somewhat similar circumstances that had occurred years previously in England, that the commencement of our work anywhere must needs involve scenes of great disorder. And it must never be forgotten how serious was the effect of the unfriendly attitude of the authorities upon the mind of every decent citizen in a country where all regard opposition to the Government as naturally allied with extreme socialism, unbelief, and vice.'

Prayer, faith, and love—a boundless love for Germany, as many of his old Officers delight to recall—however, conquered in the end.

His experience in the historic city of Worms, in 1887, is an example of his method of procedure. After a trial in court in which The Salvation Army was ordered to 'be silent for ever in the entire Circuit of Worms,' the Commissioner wrote home as cheerfully as usual from Stuttgart:

' "Home once more!" So I felt when I got here yesterday, the journey from Worms being across country and tedious. All our people had left Worms as soon as the trial was over, and so the town thought we were gone. How they stared at me! I go to Murrhardt to-morrow, Esslingen on Sunday, and then back to Worms till ordered away. You need not have any concern about my comfort, as I dropped into clover at once. My Quarters are dirty, it is true, because I am with a blacking dealer with a family of five. Moreover, if we even happen to get into prison

we shall be all right, for I find from those who have been in several times for "War Cry" selling that it is a very different affair from England.'

On his return to Worms he writes :

'I found a warm welcome from people whose hearts have been made glad already with The Army's joy, and who rely upon our staying by them. Mine host, whilst we walked along trying to commune with the little German and English we could muster between us, delighted me by bursting out singing, "March on, march on, we bring the Jubilee!" No, they have gone too far for us to retire. We must fight out the battle somehow.'

The 'somehow' here was, as in other like cases, tiny Meetings—or rather social gatherings of friends—visiting, and the sale of the German 'War Cry,' which he engineered so skilfully as to make it 'finance' the Officers when other sources of income were impossible.

It was not long before the authorities recognized Commissioner Railton as the prime mover of Salvation Army operations, and with no very great surprise he learned one day that he was expelled from Prussia.

Regarding this edict, he writes to his wife :

'Headquarters has wired for me, and I shall be in London to-morrow night. It is most horrible, as it cuts me off from following up the biggest hit yet made in Germany. The fact is—for your sake I did not choose to let it out—on the way home from Copenhagen I called at Kiel, where the police told me I was expelled from the whole Empire never to return. I have no doubt it was pure gammon, as the Home Office people in Berlin, to whom I repeated it on my arrival, seem to be friendly enough, and will no doubt set it aside.'

The decree, however, soon proved to be genuine. This the Commissioner considered was a pity, since a term of imprisonment might effectually cut short his labours at any time. But to leave Germany until the order was rescinded, and meantime to desert his brave little handful, never even occurred to him. He decided to trust God to keep him out of prison unless he was particularly wanted there, and meanwhile he took the

precaution of keeping well in the background. For a year or two, therefore, he came and went at intervals, vanishing promptly whenever necessary.

So blessed was his work that in 1890, in spite of the expulsion order that still held good, the Commissioner was appointed by The General as Territorial Commissioner for the 'Heilsarmee' in the German Empire. One of the greatest pleasures connected with the appointment was the fact that Mrs. Railton and the children were able to make their home with him in Germany. Whether it was an unmixed blessing to his wife is uncertain. She had the joy of helping her husband; but, on the other hand, she had to witness his self-denials, poverty, and privations.

'Oh, the weariness of those years to him,' she says, 'and the suffering to me of seeing him start off on those fourth-class journeys!'

In vain he explained to her that his object was not altogether one of economy, but to mix with and talk to 'the people.' He travelled on an average about two hundred miles a week, and the fourth-class carriages were, strictly speaking, not carriages at all, but seatless, unheated vans at that time. Overcrowding being forbidden in Germany, it was stated that these carriages were only for the accommodation of 'seven horses or forty men.'

The late Colonel Schoch, of Holland, accompanied the Commissioner on a pioneering tour through the country, in which they travelled for a month, always fourth class, holding Meetings in the railway carriages by day and in the large towns when they stayed for the night. 'An arduous tour,' said the Colonel, 'but one of great blessing.'

Lieut.-Colonel Junker, Mrs. Railton tells us, invented a plan for preventing her husband from travelling penniless, which proved more successful than many they had tried. Together they would see the Commissioner off on a twenty-four hours' journey, and as the train was moving Junker would draw a packet of letters from his pocket. 'You are going

without these papers,' he would cry, and the Commissioner, imagining something important had been forgotten, would snatch the packet. Junker would then turn to Mrs. Railton with a smile of triumph, observing, 'There's money in that packet. He would not let me give him even ten pfennigs for a cup of coffee, but he has now at least a few marks from which he cannot escape.'

Stuttgart was then the Headquarters of the Heilsarmee. A very small room would have held the entire German contingent. The Commissioner was so ill when he took charge that he led his first Officers' Meeting from his bedroom, the Officers sitting in an adjoining room with the door open.

It was here he was granted a wonderful 'God-send,' a direct answer to his faith and prayers for Germany, in the person of Jacob Junker, already referred to in this chapter. Interested in The Army, first through a German-Swiss 'War Cry' and later by a visit to Stuttgart Hall and Headquarters, Mr. Junker deliberately gave up his business and worldly prospects, went through Training in England, and returned to the Commissioner's side to become his constant helper and adviser—a Salvationist after his own heart.

Junker's work for Germany is deathless, and were it not that to the Commissioner's own pen we owe the record of his life, we should probably have learnt from that little book how much of his self-denying spirit he gained from his leader's example.

Glancing through the biography we see how, all unconsciously, while telling of Junker's conflicts, Railton recalls his own experiences of those days, and when he describes his friend's humility, simplicity, and zeal for souls, we recognize the close resemblance between the two. Of the Colonel's sudden death after eleven years of consecrated service Railton writes: 'He fell beside the grave of a comrade whose funeral he was conducting, and the sudden, soldier-like termination to his career was just in accordance with his own wishes.'

Meantime, Berlin was manifestly the right place for the Headquarters, so he moved thither, taking a prominent and suitable place in Friedrichstrasse. All efforts to get his own expulsion from Prussia rescinded having failed, he felt it best to establish himself in Hamburg, the business being forwarded to him from Berlin. He told his wife of the fine Quarters he had secured in the Schweiner Market in Hamburg, where he was quite comfortable. But when she had seen the 'comforts' no wonder she was distressed!

'The situation,' she says, 'might be good enough, but the only possible bit of warmth in the sitting-room was from a small oil-stove on which all the cooking had to be done. This meant that both he and the Officers had to sit in a cold room and put up with the simplest food. I pushed my investigations further and asked where his own room was; he said on the flat above. When I reached it (we were in the depth of a snowy winter) I found one chair and a bedstead of that sort which had no mattress lying on it and could in no way be "tucked in"; it was covered with one thin rug, and there was nothing else. I fairly wept with perplexity, for I knew that if I bought blankets I had no means of ensuring that he would use them; he would be certain to think some other Officer more in need.'

However, he submitted to possessing one thick rug on the understanding that it should travel with him, and by being spread on the floor enable him to sleep in fourth-class carriages.

In Hamburg he took particular delight in spreading Salvation Army literature in the restaurants between midnight and one in the morning. He was there also during the awful plague of cholera, and as Mrs. Railton says, 'stayed with our people and kept them jolly.' With the exception of the public-houses, the only place where the buriers of the dead were welcome was with The Salvation Army; but Railton was glad to see them one and all, and the Salvationists were marvellously preserved from sickness.



COMMISSIONER AND MRS. RAILTON WITH THEIR CHILDREN
IN GERMANY

The Commissioner's absence from the centre becoming very awkward, he finally decided to risk returning to Berlin. The night he arrived he was announced for a Meeting, and the police got wind of it. The next day he had to appear at the police station.

'Did we not tell you to leave Berlin?' growled the officials.

'Yes, yes,' he agreed ingenuously, 'and I assure you I went straight away. I only came back last night.'

'But you *cannot* live in Berlin,' they protested.

'No, no,' he answered; 'I prefer to live in the suburbs—the rent is not so heavy.'

And so by living at Friedenau, and making short raids to Berlin he managed to elude the police vigilance and yet to keep in touch with his Headquarters.

The long East Prussian tours which soon followed, involving weeks away from home, made his life most arduous. He insisted on sharing the food of Salvationists in those days; sauerkraut and potatoes were often the staple diet, with coffee, black bread, and goose-grease as a luxury. In East Prussia the people among whom The Army was working were accustomed to eat raw bacon and raw fish, and he laid aside any prejudice he might have had in favour of cooking. He also accustomed himself to share on occasion with the poorest classes of that part of Germany the habit which they had in those days of the whole family—with their visitors—sleeping in one and the same room!

But the Corps he opened in the East of Prussia were so remarkable for their spiritual power and for the zeal of the Soldiers that his hopes for the future of The Army in that district were glowing indeed. 'We used,' says Mrs. Railton jokingly, 'to call it Commissioner's "Star in the East."'

Some recollections of those days, given by his German comrades, show the influence of his life. A woman Field Officer privileged to share his early-day struggles tells us that once as they left the Hall they were attacked by a great crowd of roughs, who sur-

rounded them, and before they knew it had thrown the Commissioner to the ground and were trampling on him. As quickly as possible his comrades helped him up again, but he was as patient as a lamb, made no complaint, just prayed for them.

Another time he was leading a Soldiers' Meeting, when showers of stones suddenly rained in upon them.

'In order not to be hit,' says the Officer, 'we had to creep under the benches. But the Commissioner stood cheerfully at his post, a glorious encouragement to us all. The Lord helped us so wonderfully that evening that instead of giving up the Meeting we saw a number of souls saved. I then learnt to understand his great love for us. He was so anxious for our safety! Later I had the joy of having him, my spiritual father, under my roof for a few days when he was leading Meetings in Elberfeld. Singing he went to bed, singing he got up. We saw his firm faith in God and his Redeemer. We saw also that he lived a life of prayer.'

The following characteristic scene is given by a Local Officer from the Rhineland:

'A brother Salvationist and I were once driving a wagon of coal back to our yard, both black as Moors. Behind us, coming along the street, I noticed Commissioner Railton. We pulled up, and as he came near we greeted him with a loud "Hallelujah! Commissioner." He did not recognize us at once, for he had only seen us in our uniform as Hall-keeper and Bandsman, but he responded to our greetings most heartily, and many people stood watching as he talked to us. When in parting he grasped our coal-black hands affectionately, they were astonished and impressed. For certainly on reaching home the Commissioner's first act must have been to wash his hands!

'In the evening Meeting he said how glad he was that we had greeted him, and that though we were outwardly black, he knew our souls were washed white in the Blood of the Lamb.'

Major Tebbe, writing of experiences some years later, says:

'He came to me when I was Divisional Officer in Frankfurt, and when our Headquarters was a tiny room with very

little furniture in it. As a matter of fact, all we had was a camp-bed, an old sofa, and a chest which acted as kitchen cupboard. At night I begged the Commissioner to take my bed. Thanking me he refused, and camped on the sofa. Next morning early, at five or six o'clock, he went on his journey. I wanted to carry his bag, but this he only allowed very unwillingly, saying that he liked to carry his bag right round the world.

"The more work you give me the happier I shall be," he used to say. He was punctual to the minute. With him to be late was unpardonable, and many an Officer and comrade has received a sharp rebuke for being a little behind time.

"Once he had a Meeting in a town on the Russian frontier. We went into the public-houses beforehand to sing and invite the people to attend. On the way back the Commanding Officer said, "Commissioner, to-night you will tell us plenty, won't you, about your wonderful world-wide journeys?" A moment's silence followed. Then he cried as a wounded creature might, "My God, we must have souls to-night! We have only this one opportunity in this place." The startled Officer had not expected such a reply. The Commissioner seemed to feel like John Knox when he prayed, "O God, give me Scotland, or I die!"

There is little in Railton's correspondence which reveals those inner feelings about which he was always so reserved; but extracts from a letter, written to the late Consul Booth-Tucker,* show that at times he must have been nearly overwhelmed by his problems and difficulties:

'You could not,' he begins, 'have written with more cheering effect than in the midst of the blackest week I have lived through here yet, and that all the more because you let out what deep waters you have been passing through during your long time of weakness.

'I had almost a new revelation of the Cross the other night as I lay awake puzzling how to arrange for Corps left leaderless. I felt that in the sense of helplessness lay, perhaps, after all the deepest sting of that hour when the Saviour cried, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Yet

* The Founder's second daughter, wife of Commissioner Booth-Tucker.

holding out and on through the helpless hours is, maybe, just what He most appreciates.'

As time went on encouraging signs of progress were not wanting. The old Converts did well, new were added in almost every Corps, and where once fights with the authorities had raged fiercely, permission was given to hold Meetings, first in the Officers' private rooms, and later on in tiny Halls.

A successful attempt at Social Work was also made by Railton. Though apparently short-lived, it paved the way for future developments on the same lines in all parts of Germany.

'Our bit of sheltering in the Halls here,' he writes, 'though we had only two thousand six hundred men in when the landlords made us drop it, has raised us with high and low far above anything before. The ministers reply to our letters most politely if they don't help us. And, best of all, we get quite a new crop of proper souls out of it, as the men come early to get the best places to sit the night out. Very few of them were of the tramp sort, but mostly decently-dressed workmen.'

Early in October, 1890, tidings of the death of Mrs. Booth, The Army Mother, after prolonged and great suffering, brought a wave of tenderest sympathy to The General from his people everywhere. From Berlin Railton wrote :

'And so dear Mrs. Booth is crowned at last! Well, I have no doubt from what I hear of the last few days it must have been a blessed relief to you as well as to her for her to escape safe to Land.

'Nevertheless, I feel sure you will to-day and for many a day have a sense of pain and loneliness beyond anything that could possibly be anticipated or described. I shall be thankful for every opportunity these dark days may give to show my love and wish to comfort and help you and the family. . . .

'Our Self-Denial Week was crowned by our getting the girl I wanted off the street. She came in Captain ——'s custody by boat on Monday. I was out after her when the wire came last night, so only got it this morning.

'Yours with deepest sympathy from hour to hour.'

To Commissioner Railton, as the senior Officer in The Salvation Army, was given the duty of conducting the wonderful Funeral Service. His clear voice gave out the opening song, 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me,' and after The General's noble and touching address, his first Commissioner stepped forward and read the Committal words from The Army's Burial Service.

As quickly as possible after the funeral Railton turned back to his Command, from whence a month or two later he begged The General to give him a passing visit.

'If you cannot do this,' he writes (a journey home from Switzerland, pausing at Vienna, Pesth, Munich, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, and Frankfort), 'I plead, at least, that you come the return or outgoing journey by Stuttgart, if they can only have twelve hours.'

This programme could not be carried out, but five months after the death of Mrs. Booth The Founder paid his first visit to Germany. In the light of the events of later years his Tour would be considered but insignificant, yet it was in its own way after the Commissioner's heart—red-hot Salvation from end to end. In one Meeting, out of the forty people present nineteen were police! The rest had been obliged to obtain their tickets of admission from the police-station before four o'clock in the afternoon. A Government official sat by The General's side on the platform taking down every word.

The night journey to Barmen was followed directly after breakfast by a Staff Council, then by an Officers' Meeting.

'It was striking,' writes the Commissioner, 'to see The General sitting in the little room, where alone in Barmen our people can meet, addressing a dozen Officers at as great length and with as great care as if they had been one hundred and twenty.'

On his return to London The General, in a letter to 'The War Cry,' referred to 'the two Salvation Meetings I have been permitted to hold, one in the

blacksmith's shop at Stettin and the other in the fashionable Concert Hall in Berlin.'

The blacksmith's shop, holding about four hundred people, he pronounced to be 'not such a bad place,' and he commended the singing, of course unaccompanied by any music. After a few testimonies from converted drunkards and their wives came his own Bible-reading and description of what Salvation had done for him; then the Prayer Meeting with a dozen or so of souls, the friendly Commissioner of Police taking immense interest in the whole. Lastly, in closing, a few words to his Soldiers from their General. All, of course, through a translator. Commissioner Railton fully reports this Stettin victory in the British 'War Cry,' where he also describes the crowded and select Meeting in the Concert Hall at Berlin, at which he felt it wisest not to be present.

The arrangements for The General's well-being were truly 'Railtonian,' and several breakdowns owing to his indifference to detail are remembered by Commissioner Lawley, already in those days The General's travelling companion. The Commissioner, for instance, made use of an old time-table with disastrous results, and considered the crowded tram all that was necessary for conveying The Founder from his afternoon to his evening Meeting. So The General rode beside the conductor in the front of the car to his next appointment, while those accompanying him scrambled in as best they could behind.

He found the Hall packed, and the delighted Commissioner seemed quite undisturbed by the fact that the Officers' children were all upstairs with scarlet fever. But Commissioner Lawley says: 'The building was so low, so hot, so crowded, and as a consequence we perspired so much, that there could be no fear of infection, and all was well.'

But The General returned to London well pleased. He overlooked the breakdown in arrangements, recognizing at what a cost the progress he found had been gained. 'The simple self-denying toil of

Commissioner Railton and his comrades,' he wrote to the British 'War Cry,' 'is turning the authorities to see and understand what we are and what we do.'

The year following, The General paid a second visit to Germany, where advances of every kind greeted him, though we notice from the British 'War Cry' that during the Campaign Mrs. Railton, whilst waiting for the tram with her husband and the 'Cry' man, was hit by a big stone. Outward persecution did not altogether stop for some time.

On this Tour The General was able to pay surprise visits to two of the Berlin Corps, where he found rousing Salvation Meetings in full progress.

These years of privation and hardship were certainly making a very fine set of Salvationists. In 1893, perhaps anticipating his farewell orders, the Commissioner wrote a circular to the Soldiers of The Salvation Army in Germany, which he closed as follows :

'Be assured that my love for the Fatherland and for every German will never be diminished even if it should be my privilege to labour for the Salvation of those who have long been regarded as the foes of the Fatherland. To love all men, and to labour especially for the Salvation of the worst of them, is the life-work which unites us and all our comrades throughout the world.'

CHAPTER XIII

In Latin Lands

'In all our dealings with souls, let us know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The art of Gospel decoration has attained a perfection worthy of our century, but it is ours to put away from the sight of poor lost sinners everything but Jesus and life and death and Heaven and Hell.'—G. S. R., 'Christian Mission Magazine,' 1873.

IN the summer of 1894 Commissioner Railton attended the International Congress in London. He brought with him a contingent of some forty German Officers, representative of a fine force that God had raised up largely under the Commissioner's hand—a wonderful tribute to the years of self-sacrifice and toil he had given for the Salvation of Germany.

London was then in the midst of a heat-wave. The Halls used for the Congress were crowded to suffocation and the Meetings continuous over many days. These conditions, added to the strain of translating in whispered words the addresses to his party as they crowded round him, and of caring for them ceaselessly, proved too much for the Commissioner's already overtaxed nerves. He was manifestly so unfit for work that, instead of allowing him to return to Germany to farewell, it was deemed best at the close of the Congress to relieve him from all responsibility and to give him complete rest.

A sea voyage was recommended, and the Commissioner went for a three months' trip to South America, thus combining change and freedom from burdens with the welcome task of cheering his comrades during a brief three weeks' stay in their midst.

His short tour in South America resulted in much

blessing. Brigadier Benwell dwells on the three days he spent with the Commissioner as amongst the most inspiring of his life. They may well be taken as typical. Brigadier (then Captain) Benwell says:

'At the time of his visit I was stationed at one of the best Corps, Rosario de Santa Fé. We went to the station to receive him, and naturally passed through the first-class corridor coaches in which our leaders, having first-class passes granted to them by the railway company, always travelled. To our disappointment the Commissioner was not to be found. After waiting, and again searching in vain, we returned to the platform, where we found, waiting for us, a little man in a rough red jersey with a big yellow cross embroidered on it. This was the Commissioner. He had travelled second class, where a good deal of smoking and gambling usually goes on during the journey; and when I asked him why he had done this since he had a first-class ticket, he replied, "The people we are after travel second class, and I found my joy during the eight hours' journey in talking to them of the love of God."'

Rosario was a red-hot Salvation Corps, and the Commissioner in his element. The Open-Air Meetings on the great Boulevard were after his own heart, and he delighted in standing on the Captain's little portable platform and talking to the people, speaking at times in Spanish, at others using Benwell as his interpreter. Souls at the mercy-seat in the Meetings which followed completed his satisfaction.

'But,' says the Brigadier, 'the brightest spot in the Commissioner's visit to Rosario—the second city of the Republic—was when I took him to the provincial jail. After long efforts, the Chief Justice had granted me permission to hold Meetings with the prisoners. We took with us a plentiful supply of Gospels, tracts, and copies of "El Grito de Guerra"* for distribution. When the time arrived the warders ordered the men to the great courtyard. What a crowd! Here were sheep-stealers, horse-thieves, cut-throats, many men with blood on their hands and consciences, some of the most depraved and desperate char-

* The Spanish edition of 'The War Cry.'

acters to be found anywhere. Hundreds of them stood around as with cornet, guitar, and Salvation songs, and afterwards with red-hot exhortation, we sang and spoke of the love of God for them. Oh, how the Commissioner gloried in this Meeting! And although our time soon expired, he begged the warders to allow us to go round to the condemned cells. This was impossible. But he was permitted to speak to the inmates of the cells through the gratings. In the presence of the armed guard, therefore, the Commissioner carried on a tender and helpful talk with a condemned man, and we then fell on our knees while he prayed earnestly for the Salvation of the unhappy listener within.'

He told young Benwell that this Prison Work was a most wonderful thing, and that they ought to be very grateful to God for the open door which had been granted to them. Having just come from the International Congress, he introduced to his comrades one of the Congress songs, entitled, 'Following the Lord.' The song was to the effect that the writer, an Indian medicine man, had

Left the Devil howling in the wilderness
While following the Lord.

The Commissioner thought that its strange originality might appeal to the native peoples of South America. 'Accordingly,' says the Brigadier, 'we put this sentiment into Spanish to his huge delight, although ourselves somewhat doubtful as to how far the Indian medicine man's outlook on life suited the Spanish mind.' Whether or no, the people sang the song most enthusiastically and to the Commissioner's entire satisfaction, the burden of the refrain in Spanish being :

Siguiendo al Señor,
El que murió por mí.

Translation—

I am following the Lord
Who died for me.

He begged the Officers to persevere in teaching the people to sing. 'Make them sing,' he would say.

'Use the simplest words you can find to convey the truth, and then sing, sing, sing, until both melody and words are for ever fastened in their minds.'

Railton returned to England deeply impressed by what he had seen of Southern America. He considered that it offered a field second to none in the world for the proclamation of Salvation truth. The Army was, he felt, eminently fitted for the Latin Americans, but—and here came the great '*but*'—only men and women prepared to sacrifice and to live like the people should be sent to work in this Field. Those who sought for comfort, notoriety, or for anything differing from the true spirit of the Saviour would be neither happy nor successful in that Continent.

The Commissioner's opinion of the Spanish language was very high. He considered no tongue so well adapted to religion; it was the finest known to the lips of man, stately, dignified, and with unparalleled scope for eloquence.

On his return to England the question as to the Commissioner's fitness for a definite appointment was raised. He was ready for anything—*except idleness*—but his South American tour had evidently greatly interested him in the Latin and Roman Catholic peoples. It was decided, therefore, that he should go on a pioneering expedition to Spain.

A Spanish Officer from South America accompanied Railton, and the two set out. They took a small room in a slum part of Madrid, and using two other rooms, in which they gave or sold cheap meals to the poor, quietly began their work. Because of the strong Roman Catholic element, Railton felt it wise to make his position as clear as possible. He was not there to proselytize, but to help the people to do what their own religion already taught—namely, to repent, turn to God, and live a godly life. We have few details of this enterprise, though we are told that he was often with the priests who did not oppose him, and that he won some Converts.

But the winter with its cold and damp, as well as

the privations which he insisted upon, tried him terribly. He struggled on until the end of June, and then started for England.

Mrs. Railton, who after leaving Germany had wintered in Davos, Switzerland, for the sake of her children's health, joined him with the family at Margate, which from that time became their permanent home.

The Commissioner arrived in a serious condition of health, needing most careful and tender nursing. He lay ill for months from sciatica, and when he did rise from his bed, it was only to exchange it for an invalid chair.

Though his sufferings were intense, the enforced inaction, no doubt, saved his over-wrought brain from serious and permanent harm, and he gradually improved in the reviving air for which Margate is so famous. He was always patient, always cheerful, and just as eager as ever to do what he could, little or much, as God willed.

The following birthday testimony, written shortly before his breakdown, shows the same simple faith and joy in God's service that characterized his earlier years:

'Thank God, although I am forty-five years old to-day, I believe that in His providence I shall be able to spend many more in His service at this glorious work. But be my days few or many, my earnest desire is that I shall be a blessing wherever I go.'

His illness left him feeble and unfit for even the smallest exertion, but at length he was able to creep from his chair and make short journeys in Europe. As he grew stronger these trips grew in length, and he took an increasing share in the Meetings in the different lands, until he became a welcome visitor and exercised a wide influence in many European countries.

It appears to have been during these years that the Commissioner adopted a line of action so unusual from its width of outlook, that we cannot pass it over in silence.

We have seen Railton's abhorrence in his early life for anything that savoured of ecclesiasticism or ritual. But as his experience of varying nationalities and creeds widened, he rather brushed aside the—to him—unimportant details of outward forms, in order that he might be better able to win souls for his Master. To teach men to pray, to reconcile them to God, and to reach those furthest from the fold of Christ, these were his aims, and he refused to waste time or strength in combating the outward observances to which his hearers attached such value.

This was, up to a point, the method pursued by his General. 'I am too busy fighting my Lord's enemies to have time to quarrel with His friends,' The Founder of The Salvation Army would say; and by keeping to the main truths of sin, repentance, forgiveness, and a holy life, he was able to unite on his platform those who held the most opposite views.

But Railton went further, and—extremist that he was—would so fall in with the religious customs of the country in which he at the moment happened to be, as to surprise if not to shock those who failed to understand his motive. Indeed, it became necessary on more than one occasion for International Headquarters to remind its Commissioner that, though The Salvation Army was opposed to no religion, it associated itself with none.

In the spring of 1897 the Commissioner spent several weeks in Italy. Captain (now Brigadier) Pagliéri accompanied him as his translator. He gives us his recollections of the tour, and of Railton's methods of work. The Brigadier says:

'The Commissioner held a series of Meetings in the Waldensian Valleys, then in Cuneo, Turin, Florence, and Leghorn. He passed through the country as a life-giving flame, as an apostle, whose presence roused the apathetic and encouraged the fainting Soldiers of Christ, whilst his example of a life so wholly abandoned to the cause of Christ exercised a mighty influence upon all who surrounded him.

'The Commissioner, of course, was helped in his study of the Italian language by his knowledge of French and Spanish, but during the eight or ten weeks of his stay he became able to express himself with ease, and to hold conversations with the people in an astonishing manner.

'I watched his work, first among those who were largely Protestant, and then among the Catholics. Never did I meet any Soldier of the Cross who understood so perfectly how to adapt himself to such opposite conceptions of a religious life. One almost wondered whether he were the same person. Not only his ideals, his language, the illustrations he used, were entirely different, but his very life in all its manifestations seemed to undergo a radical transformation. Yet there was nothing forced. All appeared as natural as though, by virtue of a law similar to that which controls the colouring of birds and animals in Arctic lands—he were irresistibly affected by his environment.

'Though I had myself been a Catholic, and influenced at one time of my life by strict Protestant principles, I could not understand a course of action as enlightened as his.

'I delighted in the Commissioner's warlike ardour, in his flaming words, his courage under all trials, his tireless activity, but I was incapable of appreciating what I see now to have been by far the most wonderful side of his character, namely, his extraordinary spirit of adaptation. He certainly lived out in his life the words of St. Paul, "Though I be free from all, yet have I made myself a servant unto all, that I might gain the more. . . . I am all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the Gospel's sake."'

Railton, we should here explain, adapted himself to the religious forms of the people, not only because of any importance that might be attached to these acts in themselves, but in order, as he thought, the better to reach the godless, Christless crowds to whom these outward signs signified so much.

Yet we must remember, in spite of some contradictions, that he was, all the while, entirely in harmony with the views of The General regarding the non-observance of sacraments in The Salvation Army, holding that, unless they could be shown to be abso-

lutely essential to Salvation, it was better not to introduce them. 'If we did,' he would say, 'we should spend the rest of our lives in deciding by whom and in what form they should be administered. Let us rather get on with bringing men to Salvation.'

'Looking back to-day on my twenty-five years' experience,' continues Brigadier Pagliéri, 'I see that the Commissioner was inspired by the missionary spirit in a far wider sense than is generally understood. He was a missionary—not for a province, a land, or a people—he was a missionary for the world. All men and all peoples could have found in him a champion of their race. The Salvation of souls was his passion. For this reason it was that his religious anti-formalism went to such extremes till he tolerated and even shared all forms of worship in order to reach his aim—the Salvation of the individual soul. Such largeness of outlook and width of spiritual greatness lifts him, in my judgment, far above ordinary men. Railton was one by himself!'

CHAPTER XIV

His Roving Commission

‘Why I should be so little moved by any attachment, why so incapable in participating in the feelings which separation arouses in others, why so indifferent to the continued enjoyment of home or anything else which I fully appreciate for the time being, I cannot tell, except that God has willed it so and brought it about by long schooling. I do know that it does not at all imply any of that insensibility of affection and kindness which one might naturally conclude.’—G. S. R.

HAVING seen how, in America, Railton was appointed as The Army’s first Commissioner, ‘commissioned as The General’s representative in his absence,’ we now find him appointed as the first ‘Travelling Commissioner’ of The Salvation Army. The Organization was at this time world-wide, and in spite of The Founder’s almost already ceaseless travels, many lands were needing a visit from some well-known representative Officer.

Constant and pressing appeals reached International Headquarters from distant corners of the earth, asking that The Army would open in their lands. The need of an International representative became evident, and Railton was appointed for the task, which, with such breaks as our later narrative will indicate, ended only with his death. At first there was no thought of such a world-commission. But he travelled farther and farther afield, till his journeyings in these later years included over 126,000 miles of travel by land and sea.

Whether he himself realized the greatness of the

commission he held, or all that it stood for to the thousands to whom 'London' and 'Headquarters' were merely names, is a question. *He* was The Salvation Army to many a distant island and territory. *He* was International Headquarters to Salvationists who knew of little beyond their own land.

Railton was 'international' in the most divine sense, for all peoples were to him one family. Colour, nationality, temperament, made no difference to him; in the main they were all the same, for 'He fashioned their hearts alike,' and it was the hearts of men he was after. Those most unlike and furthest from his Master were those whom, recognizing the depth of their need, he loved the most. The more lacking he found them in the qualities which true Salvationism manifests, the more did he rejoice to pour out his life and love on their behalf. Labour, weariness, sickness, uncongenial surroundings, all counted for nothing if by some means he might win them for Christ.

'I do not think,' said General Bramwell Booth at his Memorial Service, 'there can be a nation on the face of the earth in which there are not men and women who bless his name and remember him with gratitude, saying "That man helped me." Whether you go to China or Japan, to the plains of Central Africa, away to the Northern lands, or to the far islands of the sunlit seas, in all these places you will find those who exclaim, "Bless God that Railton ever was born!"'

To-day we understand the wonderful provision made by God for thus bringing the very essentials of primitive Salvationism to labourers in far-off corners of the earth. He sent them one who, but for the disability of his health, would never have been free to stay long weeks in their midst, unhampered by any set programme, and 'living out' The Salvation Army before their eyes. This explains the marvellous hold Railton had on the hearts of thousands of Officers and Salvationists in all parts of the world. He came to them alone, unfettered by previously prepared lists of engagements. He brought to them his wealth of

experience, his boundless energy, his sympathy, his humility, and the reverent love he always showed for those struggling with difficulties. He saw their side only, and he left behind him a fleeting but wonderful vision of what a consecrated life can mean on earth. Truly, he was an apostle, 'a man sent from God, whose name was Railton.'

By this we do not mean that he came as a visitor merely, for the Commissioner's tours involved much in the line of statesmanship as well. There were Councils with the Territorial Officers and heads of affairs, visits of inspection, business letters to be written, and briefs to be made out. Before us lies the synopsis of a report following a visit to the Cape covering five typewritten foolscap pages.

The report embraces a wide field; every topic stood for much thoughtful consideration, study, and discussion. We find the 'Dutch language question,' 'Territorial finances,' 'The relationship of Officers to natives and vice versa,' 'Development of native soldiery,' 'Polygamy,' 'Training of Officers,' 'Land Cultivation,' 'Schools,' 'Kraal Meetings.' Every country visited presented its own particular difficulties and national characteristics, and called for the judgment and wisdom of a really 'international' mind and heart.

Railton was now a middle-aged man. He had come to that period of life when rest begins to look desirable—when the unexpected that appeals to youth's love of change and variety no longer lures, and when the tendency to fit into ruts and grooves is strong.

This period of a man's development brings its own special temptations and trials. It is a time that calls for self-denial, sacrifice, and a heavy drawing on the bank of God's promises to meet the discouragements of the Devil, who is peculiarly busy then in undermining the divine peace and joy that is the very life of the soul.

The Commissioner was not exempt from these temptations. If he always presented a cheerful, smiling front, if he was always ready to snatch up his little

bag and depart with a 'Hallelujah' to the uttermost parts of the earth, and always found ready to help while laughing at one's fears, it was the result of battles fought out alone with God, *not* because he was blessed with an especially strong or self-reliant temperament. He had his moments of sore temptation and dark discouragement. But, as his wife says: 'When all seemed dark-black his religion was everything to him. I do not think he had anything apart from it. His faith that God would do what was right was so strong.'

Yet there were times in the Commissioner's experience when he was heavily assailed; as, for instance, when he writes to his wife:

'You can guess how I've been feeling when I say how *enormously* I was helped yesterday by a kind word from Colonel J——, who told me how his soul had been stirred up by the reading of some of my writings, and how much my reports continue to help.

'Certainly, I am looking for a blessed Sunday, but last Sunday never gave me a ray of joy. Of course, I try to put my depression down to physical causes and to the continual uncertainties of my life, but there remains a very uncomfortable assurance of not feeling anything like what God's promises and purposes must be intended to give us all at such times.

'I do so want to cling to God and get more from Him somehow, and if He would *only* make some way for us to be together in His service!'

The Commissioner had a healthy and appreciative love for the fellowship of his comrades, and only the grace of God could have upheld him through his long periods of solitary travel. Yet he made friends wherever he went, in spite of his own criticism: 'I find I am no good in a house; can't chatter; wish I could!'

Because he was always cheerful, not to say radiant, while exceedingly reserved as to his personal trials and frets, the majority of his friends concluded that he was without them, and used him as a dumping-

ground, so to speak, for their own. These were the people who would say enviously: 'I wish I were made like the Commissioner, but I'm so easily depressed!' Made! Yes, to be sure, but made by the grace of God, the very grace that would be sufficient for us all did we yield ourselves 'a living sacrifice' and steadfastly set ourselves to make God first in our lives as he did.

But, above all, his heart cried out for the comradeship of his wife, and his life was one long looking forward to the day when that bliss should be his again. The following from a birthday letter to her shows us something of his feelings:

'This will only reach you in time to wish you many, many beautiful years of usefulness to follow this birthday. Even in wishing you them I half hesitate, though, because really life on this side of the grave is so full of uncertainties, and of the most certain sorrows, that it feels doubtful kindness to wish anybody long to live. Yet I suppose what all mankind has so commonly desired, and what God has now put before us as a blessing, must be, somehow, upon the whole, good. And I do wish you all that is good.

'Do you want to know part of the wish? It is selfish, I expect—of that there can be no question. I do want you to live and be well and be everything that you are, and more so, as long as I live here. When I go, I suppose I ought in duty to the poor survivors to be desirous to leave you here still. But I do not feel at all like it. I should like us to be perpetually *together*, as well as perpetual comrades!'

Railton's first long journey as Travelling Commissioner was to the West Indies, where he will ever be remembered with love and gratitude. A Jamaican Divisional Officer writes:

'His Meetings were exactly such as suited his hearers. He adapted himself wonderfully to the needs of the coloured people, and was a real help to us. His great power lay in his humility and his willingness to be anything or do anything. In Barbados the roughs were so troublesome to the Officer in charge that the Commissioner took his turn

at keeping the door while the Officer did the Meeting. We found in him a real brother.

'When he came out to Demerara we had had no rain for about six months, and we had everything fixed for a great demonstration. He prayed that God would bring the spiritual as well as the natural rain, and asked the Lord to send it. There were about five thousand people in the Open-Air round the trees, and we stood on a large lorry, and while we were having our Meeting the long-desired rain came down in torrents. We had to go and seek shelter under the van!'

But there were tired days as well, when it almost seemed as though he could not go on. Once having about a mile to go to his billet after the Meeting, he was so exhausted that he said to the Officer, 'Well, I can't walk. I must sleep here under the trees.' 'Can you ride a bicycle, Commissioner?' asked the man, greatly perplexed. 'Never ridden one in my life,' was the reply. But the Officer was desperate. 'Never mind, get on to mine,' he commanded, and to the Commissioner's intense amusement he made the journey in comfort pushed along by his resourceful companion.

His own letters show how thoroughly he enjoyed his work:

'We left Kingston Saturday, and were met at the station after an hour's ride, and all the journeyings since have been in a buggy, done up specially for me; and it is a decent turn-out, with two proper Salvation Army horses, in as good condition as the average Royal Artillery ones, and really admirable. They make a rush at each rise, though they do not hurry on level ground. The roads are sometimes A1, but generally as rough as English ones, and such ups and downs! You pass from scene to scene of tropical splendour such as I shall hardly see again, I keep thinking—and yet how do I know?—and all is mixed up with bits which might be Devonshire lanes.

'Our country Corps are little wonders: mere handfuls of people, who yet drum up crowds, both outdoors and in, and are ready to keep on till midnight, and then no one wants to go. But the audiences are of the very hardest

material I ever saw—partly of the self-righteous and partly of the mocking kind. They seem immovable until there is a break, and then they all fly into an excitement at once. I yet hope to see a proper breakdown somewhere.’

The only drawback to his billets—otherwise ‘beautiful,’ mostly with West Indian Officers—was the absence of baths, no small trial to any one so naturally fastidious in all matters affecting cleanliness.

Though away from the centre, his thought for The Founder, and desire to give him cheer and encouragement was ceaseless, as the following, written from Georgetown, British Guiana, indicates:

The most distinguished light here is a coloured man, Smith, saved in Nova Scotia, whose first sight of The Army was when you stepped out of the train, took your coat off, and spoke during a twenty-minutes’ halt at Amherst. . . . Whether therefore you wake or sleep, remain in London or travel, dear General, be assured that this miraculous reproduction of the Whitechapel loaves and fishes and oil-cruise is going on to an extent we can never estimate.’

Again from the third-class of a mail steamer:

‘They have all been nice to me. The captain says he believes in us because we are “practical,” and make people work.

‘How the Kaffir labourers, laughing and dancing over their work, have charmed me! Think of these enlightened fools counting them an “inferior race”! What big times yet await us when we get “inferior races” roused! God grant us strength and wisdom for it all, and to persevere with all the rebellious . . . of the whites, too!’

In a letter to his dear ones from Barbados, he gives a glimpse of his Meetings:

‘All the way along here we get people and souls. Our people stick to the Prayer Meeting splendidly. Some days last week I had to go and help the doorkeeper, for a few had begun to give trouble. They were completely subdued by the mere sight of me there, especially as I kept out all who were not quite good until Sunday. We get every night about forty young men who would be else-

where our roughs, but who are all well-dressed, and can be as polite as merchants, if they choose. I made their coming in on Sunday night dependent on their good behaviour outdoors, and now there is not a soul really troubles us except two or three half-witted sort of lads! If I can get home by this boat it *will* be nice!'

The Commissioner was, however, only at home a little over three weeks when the Boer War broke out, and The Founder sent him out to Africa as his representative, with a commission to do what he could to help in this time of need.

He set off full of hope, but a bitter disappointment awaited him. Instead of being able to get to the front, he found the door firmly closed against him, and all prospect of co-operating with his comrades of the Naval and Military League had to be abandoned. It was at moments like these that the beauty and depth of the Commissioner's consecration shone out.

Another sort of man, when unable to accomplish the important object for which he had come, might have sailed for home, without waiting to inquire whether the Lord had anything else He wanted him to do. But, as a friend wrote to Mrs. Railton: 'When he could not do these greater things, he at once threw himself into other branches of work, such as helping our native stations, and he was of untold inspiration to Dutch and English alike in those difficult days.'

While vainly trying to get a permit for the front—a task trying to the patience of the most phlegmatic—he had presented himself at the Cape Town Headquarters of The Salvation Army as a candidate for 'any sort of work.' Thus he filled in his time with Meetings, conferences with the South African Commissioner, and even with collecting for the Self-Denial Fund, after which he offered to take the place of the Officer in charge of The Army's work in Zululand, while the tired-out Staff Officer took a much-needed rest. He writes home:

'As for myself, it could not help being a melancholy

Self-Denial Week, though collecting here is very, very easy as compared with England. Nearly all are so polite, and in spite of all other claims give something. It was very charming, of course, to feel that I was of use and that I am likely to be of real help and relief in the Zulu War while Smith* goes for a rest.

‘The heat has taken far more out of me than I realized while the process was going on, and yet Zululand will be hotter, and I shall just have to be content to do what I can, thankful if I can relieve Soul (the Officer working amongst the natives) for the time being, as he is positive I shall.’

A few weeks later he visited the Catherine Booth Settlement, and some idea of his great love of nature may be gathered from the description he gives of its scenery :

‘So, with the kind permission of the crocodiles, snakes, and hornets, let us climb the hill, about half a mile from Amatikulu River, to the Catherine Booth Settlement. If we were mere tourists the climb would be well worth while, for the view from the front of our house is one of the very loveliest in this world. Mountains, hills and valleys, trees and fields, with the winding river shining out here and there, and the great road occasionally showing its plain, clear line, form a total that reminds you of Wales and Scotland, and other lands by turns, as the ever-varying lights of sun, moon, and stars illuminate it.’†

After a stay of a few weeks he writes from Catherine Booth Settlement :

‘My last days here have now fled away, and although I could stay most happily, if properly at work, I am glad to get where I hope to be of more use. After posting this I am to get my first real bit amongst the people, having prevailed upon one of our own Soldiers, in whose kraal are also a lot of heathen, to let me spend a night with him.

‘The best Meeting yet of the whole series was last Thursday; that is, it was nearly an entire heathen place to which our people marched with flag and drum, where

* Lieut.-Colonel Smith for thirty years engaged in Native Work in South Africa.

† From ‘Our War in South Africa.’

we got more heathen hearers than I have had before—about one hundred, I think. We got no one out, however. Sunday morning I made them come with me to the nearer kraal, and there I had my first Meeting inside a hut. It was a poor specimen, where the consumptive girl lives whom we have visited.

‘I fancy we did not see at all a good place. True, the walls are wattle, swarming with small cockroaches, but then we know they destroy other insects and leave human beings alone. The floor is far cleaner swept and the whole appearance, in even this poor hut, far more orderly and nice than homes that can be found by whole streets in an English town or village.

‘The poor girl called in all her family, and there they sat, a really splendid set of young men and women, all pretty near to nakedness, and all listening with the deepest attention. They do love to sing with us and clap their hands to it. I could not judge much as to the poor girl’s spiritual state, having no confidence whatever in my interpreter’s discernment, but I was cheered to see some of that lot come up to the Meeting later in the day.’

The Commissioner felt he had done but little in Zululand. He never dreamt how lasting was the impression he had made. One of The Army’s most distant Missionary Stations situated in the very heart of Zululand has been called ‘The Railton Settlement’ in his beloved memory.

Lieut.-Colonel Smith writes to Mrs. Railton:

‘Your husband visited me at my Headquarters at the Catherine Booth Settlement on the Amatikulu river. He did not go as far north as the Settlement which has been called after him; but his saintly life and beautiful spirit made an impression upon the Zulus, and to-day they talk of him with sincere regard and almost a holy reverence.’

For The Army Hall, in which the Railton Settlement Meetings are held, Mrs. Railton sent out a large photograph of the Commissioner. When framed and glazed, there was some difficulty in getting it to its destination. Brigadier Soul tells us that it had to be taken sixty miles from the Catherine Booth Settlement in a single-horse trap, walked down all the hills,

pushed up hill, and held back down some of the steepest dips. The picture was wrapped in rugs, strapped to the back of the seat, and 'great was our delight when we outspanned and found it intact.' This portrait is, it seems, the only thing of its kind within many miles, and the natives regard it with amazement.

The Army Hall belonging to the Railton Settlement was built while Brigadier Clark was Divisional Officer, and opened under his successor, Brigadier Soul, who tells Mrs. Railton in a personal letter that :

'The magistrate, Mr. Jackson, declared the building open. We had the place gorged with red heathen men and women; quite a crowd of them "ringed" kehles, or head-men. Some £6 3s. was given and collected in cash for the opening, as well as fowl, goat, corn, and other native produce; and I thought how dear Commissioner Railton would have loved such a Meeting! Memories of him came before me, his face all aglow as he walked about in "the Ridsdel Location"* Meeting and said, "Ah, Soul, this is just like Whitechapel days again!" The singing was going almost all the time, together with prayers and exhortations; and you can imagine the Commissioner in his red jersey putting his hand so kindly on one and another, and telling them (in the bit of "Xcosa" he had picked up), "Yizani ku Jesus!" ("Come to Jesus!") Yes, remembering that the Commissioner was one of the Voortrekkers of The Salvation Army, "Railton" is just the right place to bear his name. It nestles amongst mighty mountains clad with giant trees, and is right in the heart of Zululand, near the historic fighting and burial places of the Zulu kings and with crowds of heathen in all directions.'

Of the work attempted by the South African Salvationists in this time of universal upheaval (1899-1902), Railton writes appreciatively :

'I hope you have seen the account of our man in Kimberley who took hundreds of refugees to our Hall, and even held Meetings in the mine. Our lot tower above

* A Native Salvation Army Settlement named after Commissioner Ridsdel, a previous Commander of the Territory.

the selfish set who "have no duty" outside their own homes. Dear old — rushes in and establishes a Shelter the moment he can get into Kimberley, and would have had me there now if he could.

'You will see in the Cape Town "War Cry" two pages full of our great Whitsuntide victories: ten souls on Sunday and forty on Monday, including eight "drunks" at a midnight "go."

'Now, if you have not already remitted that money you have no need to; and yet I suppose it will be a relief to you to send me some, and it will be great fun to me to look forward to bringing it home again! No more clothes to be sent.'

Then later, when faced with some of the special difficulties of South Africa at that time:

'I have to prepare for the Commissioner's visit here, for I am the acting Divisional Officer once more. It is a slow country, after all. The mines cannot get properly to work because they cannot get the needed coal, the rails being so absorbed by the military. This hinders the return of many of the English, and makes a lot of distress here which I hope we may be able to lessen a little. The great puzzle is how to relieve superior mining people and families who are far above wood-chopping.'

As Acting Divisional Officer, all the Officers of that Division were, of course, under his care, and he writes of the condition of things at Grahamstown as follows:

'The present solitary lad is discouraged and wanting to rest, and they hope to send me in another who is discouraged because he has only had a poor Corps! So you are to pray for me to get him on his feet again as an Officer to the Dutch Whites and possibly some other people.

'I think I have spent more time in visitation here than in almost any other place, and yet it all comes to so little. But it is really pleasant to feel that you are helping people to do and endure the unpleasant!'

Not content with these experiences, the Commissioner intended to acquire first-hand information as to Corps work. He therefore went to the Divisional Officer for the Eastern part of Cape Colony, and

asked to be given the charge of a Corps—something that was pretty hard. The Staff Officer in question says:

‘I put him in charge of Tarkastad, and for several weeks he ran the Corps as a Field Officer. He lived in an old empty place attached to the Hall, sold “War Crys,” visited his Soldiers; in fact, did the work of a regular Field Officer. Whilst there a man applied for a liquor licence. The Commissioner at once went out single-handed into the streets with a bell, gathered the people together, and so vigorously opposed the proposal that the licence was refused.’

We have the Commissioner’s own account of his stay at Tarkastad. He writes home:

‘Since Monday I have just revelled in my new Command. The Commanding Officer went off that morning. The mayor, an ex-publican real estate agent, begged me to stay on with him, but I would come to my Quarters, though I agreed to go to him daily for tiffin, which means a jolly good dinner, at one o’clock. So I just get my own cocoa on my own spirit stove and eat up some loaves for the rest of the day. As I get on I shall come into the régime of no end of things sent in.

‘People cannot, as a rule, understand much of either my Dutch or English; but we got our first soul, a big woman, a backslider; and the second last night, a lad of eighteen who had come and stood by me. I had announced a great Women’s Demonstration, but no woman but the one saved on Monday night ventured. So I got the lad, and I addressed them just as I had meant to address the crowded Hall, and got home by nine o’clock. Then a mail came in about 9.30, and I had a copy of “The War Cry,” and went to bed, and got up about 6 a.m.

‘Last night was a terrific storm, and yet the rain stopped so that I got to the Open-Air in front of one of the best hotels, in the mud and lightning. One girl and lad stood with me, and then some of the young swells came off the “stoep” (veranda) and helped me to sing, just for fun.

‘In spite of it all, and perhaps because of it all, I got up this morning more jubilant than usual, singing:

“Still Christ is my Salvation,
What can I covet more?”

During his varied experiences in South Africa, Railton had noted and rejoiced over the manifestation of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which enabled those outwardly at enmity to grip hands beneath The Salvation Army Flag, and to labour together for the welfare of the needy. He writes :

‘ During the past six months I have slept nearly every night in some home whose inhabitants had relatives or friends fighting on both sides in the Anglo-Boer war, and the perfect peace and joy God gives to His people at such times has been marvellous indeed to witness ! Only under our Flag at the present time can you see people of three races, praying together in two languages (and sometimes more) with perfect unity of heart.’

His journey homeward was made by the slow East African route in order that he might stop at various points to prospect for possible openings for the establishment of Army work. In his farewell letter home, written from Durban, he says :

‘ They have granted me a passage with leave to call off Tanga, so that I can get the entire run for £15, and that will be a continual comfort to me. The commandant readily cancelled the prohibition against my landing at Delagoa Bay and Beira, so I can land wherever there is time for it.

‘ We do not have to be on board until to-morrow, Sunday morning, at half-past ten, so I shall be able to have my last Knee-Drill and breakfast comfortably here. I hope you will be able to be persuaded by mine to Esther that I am not going into anything dreadful because I am travelling third class.

‘ So now when I have finished my last South African mail, and paid my last visit to the Rescue Home, then I will turn away and think all sorts of things ! In the far, far away I see my darlings, and it will be a cheer all the while to think I am getting on towards them. I shall have far more than enough to occupy my attention all the time, with calls almost every other day at some place or other, till I get to the longest piece of voyage between Mombasa and Aden and Suez. God be with my darlings all the time !’

CHAPTER XV

Territorial Leader for France

'He never intended that His Kingdom should come whether His people did His will or no ; and His greatest mercy to us, after all, is the continual renewal of our resolution to go out and proclaim it to men, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."'—G. S. R., from 'Prophecies Fulfilled.'

IN 1901 from being merely a beloved visitor and friend, the Commissioner was made responsible leader for the Work in France. He received the appointment—which proved to be his last Territorial Command—with keen delight, although he well knew the special difficulties existing at that time, and cherished no illusions as to the task before him.

'I hope,' he writes to The Founder from Switzerland, before taking up his new work, 'that I shall not fail to give you yet some cause for rejoicing over France.'

His long and intimate knowledge of Europe made him the more welcome by all, and though but one brief year in charge of the Territory his personality and influence will never be forgotten.

The translated expressions of some of his Officers will perhaps be the best proof of this, and we take the following from a pile of letters.

Mrs. Lieut.-Commissioner Peyron, wife of the present Territorial Commander of France, who is French by birth, says :

'Few Officers did as much for France. My beautiful father-in-law, Brigadier Albin Peyron, was another of the same kind, and he was a saint very like Railton. The French

are not so much impressed by great things; they see these to perfection in the Catholic Church. They look at the *man*. What impresses them is the individual, pure and holy, with the light of God shining from his eyes. Some say that the French are light—that from some aspects they are not a deep-thinking nation. But in religion they ask for the deepest depths of seriousness, even for the tragedy. The Commissioner was always simple and reverent, and there was never any empty show or "tomfoolery" about him. I have known him ever since 1886. He has been of great help to me personally. Never shall I forget Railton at a Council of Officers at Nîmes, conducted by The Founder. He was not then our Commissioner, but was ever on the watch for a chance to serve others. Just a few moments before the Meetings began I saw him carrying a bucket of water that he had drawn from a well for the Field Officers. He was so grateful, too. He would thank the Officers so warmly for their care of him when leaving a Corps. I consider that he did more to revive the spirit of prayer, during his stay in France, than any one else.'

Lieut.-Commissioner Peyron, as his Chief Secretary, travelled with him—third class, of course—and dwells affectionately on the characteristics which marked his work in every land. His simplicity in visiting, his way with the working people, going in and out as one of themselves, and getting them to talk freely to him. Wherever he went he had a kind word for all, and would often read the Bible and pray with them.

Commissioner Railton was always a great believer in 'War Cry' selling, and by a Manifesto in the French 'En Avant' he encouraged his people to take up this work. He writes:

'The sale of our papers, accomplished in the spirit in which our sellers go forth, is a training school more valuable than all the lessons merely learnt in books. To understand what it implies, go and sell our papers among the careless! This is one of the simplest and easiest ways by which each reader may pass on to disobedient souls the commands of God.

'Has your heart been so penetrated by the love and joy of God that you are able to sing in the midst of suffering? To take part in such an orchestra you must have a heart filled with love for God and souls. Those who have no voice for singing may have His heart of love. You may have it to-day; it is that new heart given by our Saviour to all who ask—that heart which is absolutely necessary for us to possess if we desire to enter Heaven.'

But he did more than issue the Manifesto; he set an example which France will never forget. Though as Territorial Leader he could not give up much time to selling the papers, yet sandwiched in between other duties, and before and after his Meetings, he would snatch up the little well-known bag, in which he carried them (bequeathed as a precious legacy on leaving France to a brother Officer), and go off with them to some poor street or court. Such experiences as the following were a real holiday for him:

'I had a splendid Saturday afternoon in the cafés with the "En Avant." The card-players stopped playing, and all listened with Breton reverence whilst we sang. With that and Sunday afternoon at the lowest café we raised the congregations in the Hall considerably.'

Commissioner Kitching will never forget the testimony of a happy Paris Salvationist, a one-time cleaner at the 'Rue Auber' Headquarters, who was won for God by the Commissioner's singing.

It seems that it was his practice when taking his bath to sing at the top of his voice. Indeed, when Railton was their father's guest, Commissioner Kitching's sons, as little boys, would stand in a delighted group outside the bath-room door, listening for the mighty splash and spasmodic bursts of song which proceeded from within.

On a certain Saturday afternoon when all the staff had gone home, the Commissioner took a bath at the Paris Headquarters. During the process, as usual, he sang loudly a new French Salvation song. By and by, his toilet over, he came out to find a cleaner on the stairs. 'May I ask you, Commissioner,' she said

timidly, 'to tell me the words of that beautiful song you were singing?' 'Delighted!' he answered, and not only repeated the words but taught her to sing them. Then came the question as to whether the experience she sang was her own. 'No.' She had often wondered at the joyful looks of the 'Salutistes,' but—for herself—it was too much. So down knelt the Commissioner on the stairs, surrounded with the brooms and brushes, and pointed the cleaner to his Saviour. Then with a joyful 'Hallelujah!' he hurried off, leaving a new Convert rejoicing in Salvation and in all the blessings and power which it brings.

Railton's health was in these years far from good, and now and again in his private letters he owns to a touch of melancholy—an affliction, however, that no one ever suspected.

Neither was he exempt from the time-honoured temptation that all was 'of no use'—the toil and struggle of no avail—the Kingdom of Darkness so much more powerful than the Kingdom of Light. During one of these seasons of trial he writes to his wife:

'But, oh, my darling, it is the feebleness of God's Kingdom after all, feebleness so extreme, perhaps, that but for faith we might well despair of the world!

'But as I contrast The Army with anything that has been before it, I think that perhaps we do not give God nearly enough credit for all He has done and the world-wide power He has given us. To think that our influence should be so incomparably greater than that of Christ Himself when He was on earth! and even the influence of many of the smallest that we have helped to exalt! And then we must reflect on the certainty of the promise that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." If so, there are many at present humbling themselves for whom God must have great plans in eternity, if not in this world. . . .'

The experience of a French woman-Officer of a visit paid to her some years later is so typical of his work in these Continental lands that we give it here. She writes:

' On his arrival it was the Commissioner's custom to say, "Get out of me the most work possible." "But you have other things to do, Commissioner," we would reply. "All else can wait; I want to help you," was his answer. Then he would go off to visit, inviting the workpeople to the Hall on leaving the factories, and holding Meetings in the blind-alleys and little streets.

' When he visited us in Rheims, in December, 1912, he fought like a giant. A fashionable audience had assembled in the finest street in the town to listen to some military music, so Commissioner seized the occasion to follow it up by an Open-Air Meeting. As our song ceased a telling appeal for conversion followed, and then the Commissioner threw himself on his knees. I entreated him to get up, for all religious manifestation had been forbidden, and I feared to lose the liberty we had gained. But he persisted,* and so we all knelt with him, without any trouble being caused.

' The Commissioner then went with us to a suburb where the very poorest factory-hands lived in little grey houses built by themselves. We wanted to invite the children to a Christmas meal. The neediest among the mothers came to meet us with her baby, Andrew, in her arms. The sight of these poor creatures in the cold evening twilight was pitiful. He spoke to them so tenderly, and caressing the baby, he blessed it, and said to us afterwards, "Never shall I forget that little Andrew!"

' After his visit I received the following letter :

(*Translation.*)

" " GRENOBLE.

" " DEAR ADJUTANT,—It is evident that you have not the least idea how much you have refreshed and blessed me, nor what good it does me always to receive a letter from you, not only after a victory such as that, but in hours of trial. I shall never cease to believe that God will make use of you for great things. He may renew your strength, and your health, dear sister, and give us some more fighting together—who knows, maybe, in Russia, China, Brazil, or Tripoli!

" " Always your comrade,
" " R. " "

* Unwisely and contrary to his usual caution.

From the good-bye letters we see how deeply, when his farewell orders came, his Officers regretted his departure. They little realized his physical unfitness for the continued strain of an intricate and difficult Command.

Describing to Mrs. Railton the Farewell Meeting in Paris, which he tells her was 'really in accordance with my wishes; not a bit of personal glorification, but all and only alone to God,' he adds:

'They considered that they owed my presence in France to you, and that you, left alone with the children—one of them sick, and even seemingly dying at times—had made a sacrifice for France's sake which they would never forget.

'There really was no gammon about it. We had had a very warm, jolly Meeting, and it really helped me to receive in a far heartier way than ever before the tender inquiries for Esther and you all which have always been rained upon me wherever I go.'

A visit he paid to Holland, in 1903, gave him great cause for rejoicing over his mastery of the Dutch language. He writes:

'GRÖNINGEN.

'Well, now, it is all getting better and better for me. I am an utter astonishment to them here with my Dutch, and feel I have gained for life another language.

'We thoroughly roused every place from Saturday to Monday night going about with cornet, hand-bills, and so on. The well-to-do tradesman whose eldest son was a Candidate was asked to let him go at once. The father agreed, and in a speech gave his son up. Another father, a sort of sergeant of police, did ditto, and I saw the two sons off to the Training Garrison yesterday morning. You can imagine the effect upon the Soldiers of the three Corps here. One woman who had backed out of Candidature rushed out last night, and a rough young backslider plunged at the Penitent-Form in the old Yorkshire style. We shall have a "buster" to-night when all are united in the warmer Corps of the two. I took a very big drum and tramped to the other quieter place last night.

'I hope you have opened the packets of French papers. If you have you will see the most frightful glorification of

me that ever appeared, and here I am announced on the door as "The man of God who appears here to-night," and they have written in the same terms of me all round.

'Alas! for the great man of God. He cannot get in more folks than the little congregations they usually have. Last night at Liege it was only thirty, but I had a good time and led one woman, with a baby in her arms, to the Penitent-Form.

'The great sensation to me is the cleanliness and order and prosperity generally of these iron-workers, who get only twenty-two shillings a week, and yet whose children every day look better dressed than the average of your sons.'

Back in Belgium he gives us a charming little picture of a Continental Officer's home and family, under difficult conditions:

'In Brussels I saw, I reckon, the champion mother of The Army. Think of a Shelter Ensign's wife* with a baby down with bronchitis, and four other children, when all the place is being pulled down and rebuilt around her! The children were in perfect order and the little sufferer getting better. The mother had me and the Lieutenant commanding the Corps to a big dinner-supper, where we sat in the upset kitchen, and yet all was so nice and clean, though the dust keeps coming upon everything daily. These jolly Belgians showed such real pleasure in seeing me, showing me how even the little baby, scarcely two years old, can sing action songs: "My sins rose high as a mountain." These are by far the poorest Officers in The Army, I should think, and yet so bright and earnest.'

His opinion of the country he had given in a letter to The Founder some years before as follows:

'Belgium possessing, I think, more energy, intelligence, and fun to the square mile than any other country in the world, suffers, I fear, more than most from the sins and miseries you want us better to fight against.

'Their future King† is credited with qualities of earnest and brotherly desire for the good of all, which may help him yet to raise his country to a much higher level of general appreciation.'

* Wife of an Officer in charge of a Shelter.

† King Albert, the present Sovereign.

Little did the Commissioner guess the path of agony and sorrow through which His Majesty would be called to lead his people on and upward!

Towards the end of the year the Commissioner was dispatched to West Africa on an important prospecting and pioneering tour—a tour that ended abruptly, and as well all but ended his labours for ever.

Among the Foreign Office files are letters of many kinds from Northern Nigeria, Coomassie, Elmira, and the Cape Coast, in which the writers testify to the blessing and inspiration they gained from that passing glimpse of Railton, and recall with gratitude the earnest messages he gave in the Open-Air. In days to come the seed thus sown will, we believe, as in countless other cases, spring up and bear fruit.

After going up-country he returned to the coast. On reaching Accra he suddenly became extremely ill, with symptoms of poisoning. He lay in a native hotel sick almost to death, with no one to attend to him or even to bring a doctor.* Had it not been for two native women with whom he had made friends, and who called to see him, he might have died there alone. The pair hastened to a missionary with the news that 'A white man is there, very ill, and no one to nurse him.' The missionary and his black servant hurried to the hotel, taking with them a comfortable bed and bedding. They sent for a doctor and cared for the Commissioner day and night until he was well enough to leave for England. As soon as he could hold a pen he wrote home as cheerfully as ever:

MY DARLING,—Here I am fairly stuck with a tip-top doctor, and the Wesleyan Minister, who means to watch by me to-night. You need have no concern when you get this, for I have told the landlord how to cable if I finish.

'It may be, however, that I am not able to take the steamer which will bring this on Thursday; and if so, you will know that I am following as quickly as I can. I do not think this is fever, but only a complication of one of

* He was, as usual, by preference journeying alone.

my bad attacks of lowness of the heart ; so keep believing, and if I can I shall be in Plymouth December 20th. But I still hope God will make me quite better to finish my programme, including the Canaries. I shall, of course, send you a cable before this gets in, to put you at your ease.

‘God be with you all, darlings. He will, in any case ; but I think you will find me turning up in first-class condition.’

So urgent, however, was the doctor that he should leave the West Coast at once, that he was carried on board the first steamer sailing for England, and the captain was astonished that he survived the voyage, as when brought on board at Accra every one thought him a dying man. He had not only written but actually posted to his friend Brigadier (now Commissioner) Kitching full instructions as to his wishes in the event of his death.

Instead of ‘reaching home in first-class condition,’ he arrived only to collapse with pneumonia, and for weeks hung between life and death.

His first public reappearance again was at the International Congress of 1904—a never-to-be-forgotten time, which he enjoyed with almost boyish enthusiasm.

‘These Meetings cannot be described,’ he writes. ‘The chats with old comrades between times are delightful. The warmth of the Salvation greetings from all around are beyond description ! The universal question from everybody is when am I coming to their especial country ; particularly, of course, the Germans, French, and Swiss.’

The series of united Meetings were held in the Strand, in a Hall specially built for the purpose, accommodating some five thousand people. The Commissioner was all life and joy, and no one imagined that this was to be his last earthly Congress, nor that before the next Congress in 1914 came round both Railton and his General would have been called to Higher Service.

CHAPTER XVI

In the Far East

'Great harvests are not reaped by the fireside.

'This is always with us "the day of Salvation." Yet Salvation to us is everywhere, and always includes some new living, immediate outlook.'—
G. S. R.

NOT until the autumn of the year 1905 did Commissioner Railton turn his steps Eastward; but from then till the spring of 1908 his journeyings in the Orient were almost ceaseless.

Java, Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines, and the Malay Straits were visited by him, some more than once; and, had we full notes and diaries, or even correspondence, to cover these years, our stores of information would be rich indeed. But the more interested and absorbed the Commissioner became in his work, the less time had he for writing, and during weeks at a time—as the International Headquarters' records show—he left his leaders in England severely alone.

It is, therefore, principally from his home letters, and from remembrances gleaned here and there from those who were on the spot, that our information of these wonderful years is derived. We are able barely to touch the fringe of his travels and doings, since 'Railton was Railton,' a law unto himself, at liberty, without troubling to report his movements, to make or change his plans as seemed best in the exigencies of the moment. The Commissioner had three rules for travelling which were scarcely ever broken:

1. Travel with the people of the country, and in the cheapest way.

2. Take no luggage you cannot carry yourself.
3. Never be separated from it.

A long sea journey is said to be a rigorous test and revelation of a man's true character, and of no one was this more true than of Railton. No matter how far afield he travelled he never forgot his first love. The poor and despised of the earth were his chosen people, and he sought their company on board ship, as everywhere else.

Of one of these self-chosen steerage journeys he writes in 'All the World':

'I never before travelled with so many mothers and babies of the poorest appearance; our deck is almost covered with them. And babies' cries are as plentiful as if one were in a Maternity Hospital. But all that is only an appeal to any true Salvationist who cannot but wish to see and to know life among the poorest.'

He kept to his principle of travelling in the cheapest way, though 'third class' in the East means deck all the time. The boats from Japan to Hong Kong and Singapore carry none but natives third class. This ought to have debarred the Commissioner; but no, he soon overcame even that impediment! He procured a Chinese shirt, wore it outside his trousers, and went on board as a coolie.

The fact that he was ill in bed for ten days after this failed to teach him the lesson of moderation for which his friends had hoped. His illness he considered as a part of the 'fortune of war,' and that was all.

The keen interest he took in everything made him a welcome visitor everywhere, and the religious character of the Eastern peoples quickly aroused his admiration.

On the other hand, the Commissioner's habits of life, his simplicity, humility, and devotion instantly appealed to the Eastern nations, answering to their own conception of a divine messenger. Remembering

* The Salvation Army's Missionary Magazine.

how brief and fleeting were his visits, the influence he exerted is the more remarkable for its width and permanence. On his way to Java, he writes:

'I slept well on deck all the time, and hope I have now got properly broken in for sleeping on the floor. Oh, this East and all its peoples! Already I feel the glamour of it! There is a radical difference between these races and the Africans, but they seem as sunless and depressed as the latter are rollicking; and yet it is all so interesting, and every account I hear raises the Chinese especially more and more in my estimation.

'I did not land in Penang. I was indisposed to face the expense and feeling altogether too worn out. You may guess the remarks I make to myself as to being in such a weak condition to begin war upon three of the greatest nations of the world. But I cannot help being worn out. If I get a glorious finish there will be nothing lost; but I may bloom out into a fresh Oriental number yet!'

And again a few weeks later:

'I am writing hard at my book "These Forty Years,"* and I am full of the idea of making the most of these chances at China and Japan through the Press.

'Singapore was a most enjoyable bit. Certainly I was lodged at a place for sailors, where the first night I caught about thirty bugs, and five or more the second, and yet I enjoyed my nights as well as days there, my company chiefly being a splendid Army Medical Corps man. He is known all over the town as being a Salvation Army man, and helps the native missionaries to hold Open-Airs, which the police would stop if no white man were there.'

The Commissioner visited Japan on at least three occasions, spending in all several months there. The Chief Secretary, Colonel Yamamuro, himself a Japanese, writes:

'He was the first Commissioner to visit us. He came to us the first time during the war between Japan and Russia. He visited various Corps and took part in small Meetings, not as the great Commissioner, but just as a

* A Life of The Founder, for the Far East.

simple Soldier of The Salvation Army. He delighted to attend Open-Air Meetings, and at Kobe addressed himself in the Open-Air to a number of foreigners of mixed nationalities, speaking alternately in English, French, and German. He set to work at once to learn the language, and soon learned to sing, "Jesus saves me now" in Japanese, often singing it at the street corner to the people.

'He taught us many lessons that we shall never forget, among them the spirit of true simplicity and meekness. He also gave us a wonderful example of love for souls. I remember he visited Yokohama prison, and there found a man who had been a spy. He talked with him in the cell and urged him to seek Christ.'

Later, this man became converted and, ultimately, an Officer of The Salvation Army.

In the city of Nagoya the Commissioner obtained leave to visit the Russian prisoners (the Russo-Japanese war was at the time raging), and spoke to them in French and German. He also noticed large numbers of soldiers returning from the front, and in order to be able to welcome and preach to them, he hired a cheap Japanese house, in which he lived for a short time.

So pleased was Railton with the experiment, that on returning to Tokio he determined to launch out yet further. So he hired a disused boarding-house, which he invited a dozen or so Japanese students to share with him, and they lived there with his translator after the Japanese style. He wished to help them with their languages, and also to preach Christ to them. From this boarding-house they would sally forth to sell 'War Crys' and distribute bills announcing the Meetings.

We learn the Commissioner's own view of this experience from a letter to his daughter:

'I should like you to see my little home here, though it is by no means the place that I should invite you to. Of course, I sit on the floor and eat in the Japanese style; our beds are laid on the matting at night, and all stowed away in the morning, but we have some chairs so

as to make foreigners like you comfy when they come! We prefer the Japanese fashion, sitting on our legs on the nice thick mats; and I assure you it is all delightful, especially when we feel that we three are going to arouse a whole city with our "War Crys."

A further description of the same Students' Home is given by an Englishman when travelling in Japan, who says:

'He had a very nice thing going among the students in one of their own public halls. A lot of these young fellows accepted Christianity. They were only babes, but they lived up to what they knew, and Commissioner Railton gave them every opportunity of testifying. His faith for everybody was charming. He could see in every Japanese a future missionary, though perhaps nobody else could.'

The Commissioner's example and interest did great things for the students.

'All our family is glad to see my brother so wonderfully changed by your influence, having been with you for only three months,' writes the sister of one of his student-converts. We wish he could be with you for two or three years more! How would he be then?

'The Commissioner always told us, "Don't live to raise yourself, but live to raise others,"' says Major Ichinomiya, during this time his translator and constant companion. The Major lives out the Commissioner's example, being a red-hot Salvationist and rejoicing in hand-to-hand dealing with souls whether in the streets, trams, or trains. This often causes his comrades to observe of him that 'he has inherited the Railton spirit.'

Because of an impediment in his speech, Ichinomiya's father, a Convert from Shintoism, was unable to take part in the Meetings. But to Railton's great delight he gave practical help by walking up and down in front of the penitent-form, fanning the seekers and those who were dealing with them so

that the oppressive heat should not hinder the work of Salvation.

Meantime the Commissioner himself was charmed with Japan. From Kobe he writes :

'The Army here is splendid—what little I have seen of it. Imagine a small Corps all made up of well-to-do business people, who carry leaflets and banners in the streets and do anything else possible under the Flag. If every one of us foreigners were killed or expelled to-morrow there is enough intelligent Salvation force here to keep the thing going.'

And again :

'I was at the great celebration we held here on The General's Birthday in connexion with the welcome out of prison of one of our interpreters.* He had prayed for the policeman who had wanted to move him on, and must—naturally enough—have mentioned the Devil in his prayer. But it seems that the policeman thought the interpreter meant him; and hence all the trouble! Though only awaiting trial he had his hair cropped, but he kept happy all the time, and said "Hallelujah!" so often and naturally that the men in the cell called him "Hallelujah!" So you see that history repeats itself! We had a little welcome tea for him.'

While visiting the East the Commissioner became intensely stirred by the nefarious trade in girls between Japan and China. He attacked the whole system in his usual fearless style, crossing to China on several occasions for this purpose.

At this time Headquarters did not consider it wise for him to go alone into China. He was very far from well and might suddenly be overcome with illness or exhaustion. His errand, too, in connexion with the White Slave Traffic made him open to attacks. But he laughed at warnings and wishes alike, and writes from Shanghai in great spirits to his wife :

'Really, I fear I am getting a part of the exhilaration I do because I am like a naughty boy out of bounds. Not

* Now Staff-Captain Sakai, a Divisional Officer.

only my little wife says "Don't go there," but no sooner do I get a good prospect in China than Headquarters cables to know when I am going back to Japan. And instead of any reply I turn off to the Interior and then down here! But do not be afraid; you'll see I shall be all right. Oh, if I could see my little wife and family landing on the Bund to help me rouse up China!

'All right' it proved to be. He came and went through the Empire and the neighbouring lands unharmed, wearing the little native Chinese cap on his head. Wherever he went he received only kindness and affection. Even those who could not understand this strange man felt instinctively that his mission was one of peace and goodwill.

When passing through Manchuria in bitter winter weather the Commissioner had no overcoat. A Japanese Christian gentleman was so impressed with his devotion to God and indifference to his own needs, that he gave him a big sheepskin coat such as is worn there in winter. Of this gift he writes home:

'In the North we had extreme cold, and I do not know what I would have done unless a dear Japanese had given me a sheepskin. There are worse things in cold weather than "wandering about in a sheepskin!"'

On his return home the family asked for the sheepskin coat as a souvenir. Railton's face fell. 'I'm so sorry,' he said apologetically, 'but I met a very poor man who needed it more than I did, and I gave it to him.' The sheepskin, however, proved most valuable during his journeys in the East. Travelling on one of the huge Chinese river steamers which carry up to two thousand passengers, he reports:

'There are no bed things, as all are accustomed to have their own, so that but for my sheepskin I should have had bare boards, and as it is I have had three days in my clothes.'

The European lines will not allow any but Chinese to travel in this way, but with the sheepskin and the little Chinese cap he was allowed to pass unchallenged.

'The stories of Chinese dirt,' he continues, 'are, as usual, misrepresentations. They are very particular to wash their faces each morning and after every meal. They certainly do spit a great deal, but I get used to it. And, after all, it is only the old English fashion.'

In his work in the cause of women, the Commissioner had a worthy assistant in Major Matilda Hatcher, who actually lived for a short time with the women and girls in Tien-tsin, and gleaned reliable information for the Commissioner to lay before the consular officials.

But soon the needs of the great Celestial Empire itself won his heart, and he longed inexpressibly to see The Salvation Army at work among its millions. 'The first uniformed Salvationists,' he wrote, 'who go in the old "Hallelujah lass" style, will sweep any Chinese city or province like a hurricane.'

Headquarters had forbidden him by cable to commit them to China, but the Commissioner fancied he saw a way out, and he dispatched the historic message the very mention of which still raises a smile on the faces of those who received it at International Headquarters, so optimistic and 'Railtonian' is its spirit. It ran as follows: 'OPENED CHINA WITH A RESCUE HOME.—
D. ILTON.'

The Home was naturally of the briefest duration, but the Commissioner's stay in the Empire is everywhere remembered with affection and gratitude, and his example has been of lasting inspiration.

In Peking the Missionaries of the American Board Mission recall affectionately his two months' stay in their compound. They greatly enjoyed his fellowship with them in their Prayer Meetings, and one of their deacons, Mr. Teng, gained life-long inspiration from what he heard about the Commissioner, whom apparently he never met. From that time Mr. Teng desired above all that The Salvation Army should commence work in Peking. When years went by, and still The Army did not come, he decided to start its work on his own account. Accordingly, he had some leaflets printed in Chinese, headed, 'Salvation Army,'

and bearing the words, 'Salvation for the Soul, Salvation for the Body, Salvation for the Afflicted,' and distributed these tracts, talking to people about their souls.

He is a most zealous worker, and, though not a Salvationist, possesses to a remarkable degree the spirit of The Army which he saw manifested in Commissioner Railton. He practically gives up all his spare time to seeking out and relieving the most destitute, and goes into the worst parts of Pekin to proclaim the great Salvation which he has found.

A friend in Chefoo recalls how enthusiastically Railton set to work with the language. He very quickly mastered the Chinese for 'Are you saved?' and made use of his knowledge by putting the question to the donkey-man and many others. 'Come along,' he would say, 'help me to get hold of this chorus in Chinese'; or, 'Teach me a few sentences.' He would write them down in his own way phonetically as pronounced, and would then go out visiting so as to make immediate use of his newly-gained knowledge.

That he himself was pleased with his progress in Chinese we find from one of his home letters :

'I find this Chinese language easier to get hold of than I thought, and I really think I may get the free use of it. There is a grand old lady here, Mrs. Dr. Nevius, over seventy, whose speciality is to turn the language into Latin letters. I find I can sing a lot of it already, so that in a very few days I shall get free enough to read.'

Thus Railton became increasingly enthusiastic as to the prospects in China, holding what Meetings he could, visiting among various missionaries and sympathetic friends, writing and distributing innumerable pamphlets. His time was crowded and his hopes high.

'To-day,' he writes, 'I have given out to the Methodist Press the first Salvation Army publication, I believe, in China, a reproduction adapted to the Chinese mind of my original on "What is the Christian Mission?"' Only a little three-folder, but I hope to follow it up in Tokio

with a good illustrated cheap pamphlet describing The Army's history and so on fully.

'If I can only get hold of students somewhere, there is no knowing how soon I may be able to repeat my writing work in China, where it is so easy to sell any good book, even Bibles and portions being sold by the millions. It is delightful to be with these China Inland Mission folks. In Hankow I walked into the Home unexpectedly, and was welcomed like a brother.'

When back in Japan The Founder's approaching visit occupied all Railton's energies. Surely his Chief would cross to China and see the wonders of the promised land for himself! In November, 1906, he writes to The Founder of the prospects awaiting him as follows:

'I could not but feel my responsibility, knowing all that I do, when it came to urging you to face the Atlantic in February and the Pacific in March. But I felt that the responsibility of delaying you would be even greater under the circumstances; my hope being the effect of your visit itself upon great Japan.

'The Governor of Hokkaido, an old general, with more power and work than all the Western ones combined, received us the other day within five minutes of getting our cards, though it was between opening his Provincial Council and a banquet to the members. He said at once: "Thanks for your visit, you whose love to all mankind knows no partiality and is so generous. Be assured that you have my sympathy and esteem. . . ."

'As I ride about the country here I think I can realize some of the pleasure you will have in seeing so much of diligence, garden-like cultivation, and paradise; especially when you come to see how much the people deserve the description of an evangelist eleven years here, and speaking their language well, who said to me: "It is just plucking ripe fruit." May you enjoy very much of it.'

Some months later Commissioner Lawley arrived, being, as ever, The Founder's forerunner, and entrusted with the preparations for the Japanese tour. Now Lawley and Railton both held exceptional records for



RAILTON IN HIS SHEEPSKIN COAT WITH SOME JAPANESE SALVATIONISTS



COMMISSIONER RAILTON IN CONSTANTINOPLE

experience and devotion; both were anxious that The General's presence in Tokio should be of the greatest possible blessing. But extracts from Lawley's journal show that his brother Commissioner saw no need for the carefully planned programme which he and the Territorial Leader had before them.

'Tokio, April 6, 1907. Commissioner Railton full up with China,' writes Lawley. 'Wants me to consider proposal for General to visit. I refused to consider because of roughness of ships, trains, etc. Commissioner R. is not with me in arrangements. I am sure he feels—in fact, he has told me—that I am a "backslider. All for arrangements for demonstrations, receptions, etc., not for souls."'

Railton was unwilling in practice to admit that The Salvation Army had a message to *all* classes, as Commissioner Lawley observes. He gloried in its work among the poor and outcast. But with the 'day of great things'—those public manifestations of its activities which bring it in touch with the official and influential—he had scant sympathy. Though at the same time he fully recognized the need for the financial help which the wealthier classes of the community alone could give.

That Lawley's tact and wisdom gained the day, we see from the following:

'MY DEAR GENERAL,—Colonel* Lawley's presence is so great an enjoyment that it makes me constantly realize *how* much you must miss him. And he has made me feel quite sorry for ever having dreamt of your going to China.

'The perpetual youth and the platform which God has so graciously continued to you really made me forget the tremendous contrast between travelling here and in Europe or America till we began to look at things here together. And if the sailings should be disarranged I cannot but fear that even the great Pacific voyage may be unpleasant for you. However, it is done now, and I can only pray and trust that you may have a better time than on the Atlantic, where, of course, the time of year was so nearly the worst:

* As he then was.

'As for your reception here, from the Emperor downwards, I think there can be no fear of its not going beyond my highest hopes.

'May God bring you safely through all to me!

'RAILTON.'

The Founder's tour proved in every way a mighty success, and the Commissioner accompanied him all through Japan. He writes:

'The General was very jolly this morning, and as fresh as ever, which is wonderful! Of course, he is often very poorly, but what shall any of us be like at seventy-eight? He *would* have a Prayer Meeting at the great Students' Meeting in spite of all any of them could say!'

Railton had a queer dislike for the uniform of the higher staff, and only when under absolute orders did he appear in his full Commissioner's dress.* The following, therefore, shows that definite orders must have been imposed upon him:

'The General asked me to pray in the morning Meeting held for the Chinese. It is already very warm here; you can imagine how it feels in a little church with this dreadful long-tailed coat buttoned up! I am enjoying the interval in my jersey.'

'"R." got a new coat,' notes Lawley in his journal, 'which he had not worn for long before he burst it. This rather gave him pleasure, as he hates new things and loves the old.'

It is within the bounds of possibility that the two incidents have some connexion with each other; the bursting of the coat may not have been altogether accidental!

After The Founder had left Japan the Commissioners passed through Korea, Manchuria, and China together.

Railton's methods cannot have been to Lawley's mind, for in his journal we read:

'I have had a very poor night; "R." slept soundly enough, and always does. He seems to enjoy this kind

* It should be said, however, that on the personal request of General Bramwell Booth he fell into line much more readily.

of life; that is, an experience without plan or arrangement. He certainly takes no thought for to-morrow and not enough for to-day.'

One more entry equally characteristic from the Women's Social Home at Dalny tells us that :

'The Commissioner has found his way to the room where the girls are having their meal, and is having a Prayer Meeting with them—regardless of the fact that we have had no breakfast and have an appointment in half an hour's time !'

'Good-bye, Lawley,' said 'R.,' shaking hands at Dalny station. 'I am glad I am not going home with you. I am returning to Japan and China to do my best to get these peoples whom I so love converted.' Although the Commissioner was not able through ill-health to carry out his desires, his prayers and faith were not in vain.

The Salvation Army Flag was unfurled in Peking, North China, in 1916, and there are now (1920) twenty-six Corps, about thirty Chinese Officers, whilst twenty young men and women are in the Training Garrison.

A few months later, the Commissioner was so far from well that he feared a visit to the Philippine Islands that he had planned before returning to England would have to be abandoned. He writes to his wife from Chefoo :

'I am feeling very low, and am sending for a doctor. I think it better to write you this. I could not be more nearly at home than with these friends, who will do all any one can do. An attack like my old ones has left me very low, and in this heat and under orders for the Philippines I cannot but see it is an awkward crisis. If it is a finish it will be as like Launcelot's* as possible, but for my darlings' sake perhaps I may wish it to be at home instead. There is plenty of money in my pocket to pay for any expenses incurred here.

'Later. The doctor came promptly and examined my heart, and pronounced it quite sound. He is against my going to the Philippines.'

* His brother, who died very suddenly from heart trouble.

However, it took more than a mere doctor's verdict to turn him from his purpose, and he wrote home from Manilla in his usual cheery style :

' Here all has turned out better than it sounded. This is really cooler than Hong Kong. It is the rainy season certainly, and that makes getting about the country less easy, if I want to get about; but really I have seen all I need to in these few days.

' It would seem to me repeatedly whilst here that God must have specially comforted and strengthened me in answer to your prayers, as there has been no other reason to account for comparative energy and enjoyment instead of the repeated exhaustion I felt before.'

When once more on shipboard he writes :

' I must get this off to you from Singapore. My time at Siam ended rather badly, for the mosquitoes had very special access to us at the quay, and my last two nights were sleepless, full of bites that have now left painful traces.

' I visited a Chinese city near by. They have quite a Hindu colony here from India, and all or most of them are Roman Catholics. At the Protestant temple there were twelve. Still, one of the twelve was a most delightful Salvation Soldier, now a Candidate, and likely to be a very useful Officer as soon as he has finished his time. I shall never forget his Hallelujah greeting or a remark he made about his resolution to be a Candidate: " Otherwise I might make money and that might lead to misfortune." Who but The Army anywhere could produce such thoughts nowadays?

' So may God grant me to be of some use in Java and wherever else He will. I cannot help longing to get home. I realize painfully that I am not so well up to the heat as I was even two years ago. But you must imagine me in the very best of spirits after seeing two years of progress in Java.'

CHAPTER XVII

Europe and the War Zone

'We are God's witnesses to all mankind. Our testimony consists not merely in the use of religious phrases, but in a daily life of practical love to the unloved, which commands the confidence of the banker, the accountant, and the city or government official no less than that of the benevolent monarch or scoffing day labourer.'—G. S. R.

IN the pioneer days of America there lived a curious character who went by the nickname of 'Johnny Appleseed.' He had no settled home, for the most part wandering over the Eastern States at will, and was popularly supposed to be simple-minded. In bad weather he always found a lodging in some cosy farmhouse, for no one would refuse 'Johnny' a bed and a meal.

He lived very largely on wild fruit and berries, more particularly small wild apples that he could carry in pockets or bags. With some misty idea of paying back a debt to Nature and to the God who supplied his needs, he never ate an apple without planting carefully some of its seeds. It was this practice that gave him his nickname and also was the nucleus of the fruitful orchards that in after years made the American apple famous, not only as an article of food, but as an extremely valuable asset to the trade of the country. Johnny's little trees grew and flourished; pioneers attracted by the baby orchards were fain to build in their vicinity, and to nurture what was so well begun.

Commissioner Railton's life during these last years was very much on this order. He travelled constantly,

as we have seen, and as he went he unfailingly put in his little seeds.

Before us lies a list of the different lands visited by the Commissioner in 1908. In some of these he stayed for weeks or months, others he merely passed through on prospecting work; but glancing down the record we notice how strangely he covered what has been known (December, 1919) as the European War Zone: Germany, Austria, the Baltic Provinces, Russia from Petrograd to Odessa, Bulgaria, Serbia, Roumania, Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and Italy.

The record of this one year's work, could it be collected and given in anything like detail, would fill a fair-sized volume in itself, but we can only touch on his doings here and there, remembering that the best were never recorded.

Colonel Govaars, who in 1916—eight years later—visited Serbia and Bulgaria in connexion with The Salvation Army War Relief operations, constantly met those who remembered Railton's fleeting visits and spoke of the impression he created. At Belgrade, the Archbishop, Head of the Serbian Orthodox Church, referred to their conversation together. They had discussed the possibility of The Army's opening in Serbia, which the Archbishop did not at that time consider advisable. But the War Relief carried on by the Salvationists has altered this opinion, and to-day an open door awaits The Army in that needy land.

In Salonica the memory of the Commissioner is treasured, and in Samokoff his visit and talk to the girls of the High School made a lasting impression on several of his listeners. His hosts, in the homes in which he had been billeted, were eager to hear every detail connected with his passing, and dwelt lovingly on the inspiration his presence had brought to them.

While this chapter was under revision a visitor from Bulgaria came to International Headquarters pleading for Officers to be sent to his country. The impression made by Railton's short stay in Sofia, thirteen years before, remained in his friend's memory.

Together they had visited some of the leading men in the political and religious world, and he tells us that:

'Before leaving Sofia, the Pastor of the Congregational Church invited the Commissioner to lead the Sunday evening Meeting. He did so. He prayed, and told us something of The Army's work in England and abroad. The Pastor translated for him, and though what he said was simple, our hearts burned as he talked to us.'

Like the boy whose barley loaves and fishes—when given into the Saviour's hands—fed thousands, the Commissioner's consecration accomplished infinitely more than the most sanguine of his friends could have imagined. And in his closing years we see this likeness once more repeated. For, though we are unable to fulfil the Saviour's command, and 'gather together' the precious fragments of his life-work, scattered as they are throughout the world, none are lost, all are carefully treasured in grateful hearts, and will be passed on to others as a sacred legacy.

The Commissioner was undoubtedly a prince of pioneers. Nothing ever daunted him; he was absolutely fearless. As for that 'hope that springs eternal in the human breast,' he had more than his share of it. He might write home or to Headquarters saying that he was 'on the borders of despair,' but before a reply begging him to return could reach him, another letter or perhaps a cable full of the most glowing hopes would be received!

In every country he visited he saw glorious possibilities for extending the Kingdom of God. From one land he would be certain to drift into another just to see 'what the chances were there.' In tact and diplomacy he was unequalled. His leaders were often anxious and uneasy at receiving dispatches from, say, Russia or Bulgaria, and Mrs. Railton had visions of him languishing in some Serbian prison or in the clutches of the 'unspeakable Turk.' But suggest any of these dire possibilities to him, and he would indignantly repudiate them, declaring that these were the

finest people on the face of the earth, only waiting for The Salvation Army in their midst to render them quite perfect, while their kindness to him was unparalleled.

He seldom gave offence; he knew exactly when to speak and when to be silent; and he was gifted with some sort of Divine sixth sense that taught him when a prayer would fit in best or perhaps a song.

Remembering the company with which he usually travelled in those third and fourth-class railway carriages and steamers, that he escaped without being either robbed or contracting some horrible disease, is simply marvellous. And never an accident befell him except a slip and a fall once on Newhaven platform, and an unexpected ducking in Colombo harbour, when, not being acquainted with the peculiarities of catamarans, he overbalanced himself and fell into the water. But he came up again smiling, none the worse for his impromptu bath!

While touring through Russia, Serbia, and the Balkan States, he determined, as we see from the itinerary, to have a look at Turkey too, and wrote to an Officer in America, colloquially known as 'Joe the Turk,' asking for information that might help him. The answer he received would have discouraged any but a Railton! After explaining how he himself had failed to get into his native land ten years before, Joe went on to describe all the difficulties as well as the futility and perils of such an undertaking.

But the Commissioner was not to be deterred. He stuffed the depressing epistle into his pocket, and in due course arrived in Turkey. While here a good snapshot was taken of him in full Army uniform, explaining a 'War Cry' to a group of Mohammedans! That he landed in Constantinople with an 'open mind' is seen from a letter in which he declares himself 'prepared to drop in the Bosphorus' all unfavourable reports that he had heard concerning the Turks, and was landing 'to love and delight in them.'

His wrath was quickly aroused by the apathy and indifference of the professing Christians, and he sends home a pronouncement as sweeping as it is original:

‘The only serious hindrance to the winning of Moham-medans to Christianity is the godlessness and hatred of the professing Christians. If we can only get as far off from that—as completely delivered from all prejudice against them as from the false idea of a “False Prophet”—we shall speedily make them see how alike we are in many ways to the “Faithful.”’

To seek to win the Mussulmen over to the truths of Christianity by denouncing the prophet whom they believed God had sent seemed to the Commissioner the very height of folly.

A vivid impressionist-sketch of Railton’s influence on the Turks was given at the time to ‘The Daily Chronicle’ by Mr. Moore, that paper’s Constantinople correspondent. ‘When a priest of the Koran,’ writes Mr. Moore, ‘listens to the preaching of a Salvation Army man, and stoops to kiss his hand, a state of humility has indeed come over Turkey!’ The writer desired to see how the Turks would receive this ‘scout of The Salvation Army,’ as he describes Commissioner Railton, and was curious to know how the Commissioner would address them. It is thus he describes the unique audience:

‘The Armenians—men on one side, women on the other—filled the Meeting-room, with the exception of half a dozen benches left at the front for the Turks. They had sung several hymns before the prayers in the Mosque ended, and the Turks came over the road. In all there were about thirty, and they appeared but little out of place, though it was a new experience for many to be in a room where men and women associated. There was a green-cloaked Mullah, with a green cloth round his red fez; another with a brown cloak and white turban; two or three Softas, or religious scholars, also cloaked; several officers of the army, intelligent-looking young men, and others.’

The writer then shows us the Commissioner at his

work, in a description which is probably representative of many similar Meetings :

‘ He stood in his military uniform, the Turkey-red shirt conspicuous, at one side of the reading-desk, whereon lay the Bible, and an Armenian, a portly, dark man in a frock coat, stood on the other side, translating the sermon, sentence by sentence, into Turkish—which is understood of Armenians as well as Turks. I do not remember the text, but it might well have been that of the new régime, “ Love one another.” ’

‘ At the break-up of the Meeting the youth who had delivered the flowery speech in the extravagant terms of written Turkish came forward, supported by the long-cloaked Muezzin, to present his paper. It was then that the Muezzin stooped to kiss the hand of The Salvation Army man, a sign of respect which a Christian rarely receives ; and this good man, not quick enough with the Turkish custom, received the salutation.

‘ We understand that the Commissioner has discussed with some young Turks the project of taking over one of the old battleships that lie perpetually moored in the Golden Horn in order that they may make of it an Elevator, a lifter of humanity.’

But Railton was not blind to the darker side of the picture, and referring to the increasing unity between Jews and Mohammedans, and the possibility of coming danger, he writes, also from Constantinople :

‘ Sunday was partly occupied with a football match between Jews and Mohammedans, which is a fair picture of the brotherhood there is, and of the utter godlessness that may soon come if we do not get help quickly enough here and everywhere.’

Strange is it also to see how convinced he was that the ‘ big war ’ was rushing on. He seemed to find tokens of it on every hand, and hoped fervently that ‘ Turkey and Egypt may be able to keep out.’

Railton’s visit to Turkey showed his wisdom in accepting no man’s word as to what door was closed or open till he had made every effort to force an entrance for himself. These extracts from a letter written by

an Armenian, upon hearing of the Commissioner's death, shows that The Salvation Army will find warm friends in Turkey when it opens fire there. He writes :

' We had several heart-to-heart conversations about the needs of this country with the Commissioner. His humility, kindness, sympathy with the needy, and love to all were immeasurably beautiful. I hope that he is no exception but a true representative of the spirit of The Army. His heart at once grasped our country's urgent need for Salvation Army work. When I told him that I expected he himself would be sent to investigate the need of Adana, he replied, " I may *not* be sent, because The General and other Officers know that before I see the country I am for beginning work there. I hold that no land is hard enough to check The Salvation Army from doing what they are invited to do. The Moslems will find we are their best friends. I do not like them to be criticized so harshly. They committed and still do commit awful cruelties to Christians because they do not know the true God. They have not known Him because they have not heard of His love to them. The Army must hurry as soon as possible to take the good tidings of the love of Jesus Christ to them.'

On this same tour the Commissioner attended a large Sunday-school Convention at Lodz, with representatives from all parts of Russia and Siberia. He spoke in the church to over six hundred people, besides addressing other large congregations. He writes :

' Indeed the kindness of all these people to me is wonderful, and now I am going on Thursday to Riga, calling at some places on the way. I shall then get a little while in St. Petersburg and Moscow on my way to Odessa again.

' I do hope to convince Headquarters of the tremendous chance there is for us in Odessa. From all I hear we have a wonderful prospect in Riga too.'

As will be seen from these extracts, the Commissioner 'thought in countries.' No differences of nationality or religion troubled him. The record of his influence in a little Russian village where he settled down for some months shows the way he was able to

meet and win members of the Greek Church, undisturbed by those questions of ritual and ceremony which make of the Orthodox a people apart.

A visit the Commissioner made to the country home of two ladies interested in The Salvation Army is typical of his influence in surroundings in which both he and the Organization to which he belonged were totally unknown.

The impression he made upon the village was very remarkable. His uniform at first both surprised and puzzled the people; but one day, in answer to an inquiry, his hostess explained that 'This gentleman is English. He belongs to "The Salvation Army," that is, The Army which fights for Christ and everything good.'

'I understand,' answered an old peasant at once; 'he is a warrior of Christ,' and thus he was described ever after. Nothing that he did henceforth surprised them.

The people soon found Geórgy (pronounced with hard G as in 'gorge') Feodorovitch* to be a regular attendant at the village church. He never failed to answer the bell which summoned to prayer. One morning at breakfast he observed to his hostess, 'I heard the church bell at half-past six, and though I don't know why the priest had an early service, I attended and enjoyed it very much.'

The service (a requiem) was the first of forty to he held for an old lady, belonging to a well-to-do business family, who had just died. So he was informed, 'Well, you can enjoy going to 6.30 morning service for thirty-nine more days, if you like.' None of the bereaved family attended, nor did any of the neighbours or villagers. The Commissioner alone daily formed the congregation.

This persistent church-going astonished even the priests themselves. The village church, owing to the indifference and carelessness of the old priest in charge,

* That is, after the Russian custom, George, son of Theodore, the nearest approach to 'Launcelot,' his father's actual name.

had become dirty and neglected. Complaints were vain; neither the priest nor the officials paid any attention. But one day, to the amazement of his friend, the priest came to her saying, 'I have had the church thoroughly cleaned and dusted, and everything put in order. I fancy this Englishman must be sent from the Archbishop to look into things!' Where she had failed, Railton had, all unconsciously, won the day.

The Commissioner's rebuke when visiting a church in which the services were held in old Slavonic, will never be forgotten. Much of the service was unintelligible to his friends, Railton, of course, not understanding a word. But he remained reverently on his knees in prayer, whilst one of the ladies drew a friend aside, and they talked in whispers. When outside the church the Commissioner turned to them reproachfully, 'Could you not find a better time for talking and doing business than when you should have been praying?' he asked.

While at Tolstye he learned that a feast day was to be held in a neighbouring village. He determined to attend, especially as he had been told that a number of unlicensed drink-sellers lived in the place. It was impossible for the ladies to accompany him, but he was finally entrusted to the care of a little village girl, who was told not to leave him for a moment, and should any one be unkind or rough, to explain who he was. So the quaint pair set off, the girl holding tightly to the Commissioner's coat, so that he should not escape.

With considerable anxiety his hostess turned back into the house, anxiety that was not allayed when her brother coming in exclaimed against the folly of allowing the Commissioner to go thus unprotected. 'You'll see he'll be torn to pieces, he will begin to preach Christ, the whole village will be drunk, and there will be a terrible row.' 'Nothing of the sort,' she replied; but, woman-like, she felt so anxious that she summoned the entire household into the

garden to watch for his return. At last distant strains of a Salvation Army hymn were heard, and the waiting group espied the Commissioner marching back bareheaded, his faithful little guard still holding on to his coat, and a score of girls and young men following behind and joining in his song. Amazed at the sight, the household crowded around to ask for an explanation. 'Oh! I don't know,' he answered casually; 'they all came and stared at me, and then I began to sing and to speak to them in English. Then I tried The Army song I had learnt by heart (translated into Russian for him). I said, "Come on, help me." At first they tittered, and some were shy, but soon, one after another, they joined in, and now we are very good friends.'

Much has happened since this account of the Commissioner's influence in a far-off village was given to us, and we have no tidings of our friends at Tolstye. But with Russia as she is to-day—a world problem whose cure baffles the skill of the nations—may not Commissioner Railton's example in its simplicity and conquering love point to the only 'way out'? Would not this same spirit and teaching multiplied a thousandfold spread like a gentle dew over city and plain, bringing that balm which alone can heal her wounds or build up the 'waste places' within Russian borders?

CHAPTER XVIII

As a Public Man

‘God was in the flesh in order to be visibly, as well as eternally, a Brother to us all, that He might save us. Ah, this is nothing more nor less than the charity, without which all else is useless. Until we have got this gloriously divine feeling of tender, brotherly interest in every child of man, we can be but sorry workers for men’s Salvation.’—G. S. R., 1894.

HAVING followed Railton so far in his life-work we must now pause and consider the man himself a little more closely. He was, as we have already seen, made up of opposites, combining the most widely-differing of opinions, often to the surprise and bewilderment of his friends.

For instance, though an ardent apostle of internationalism, knowing ‘nothing among men save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,’ content to spend his life with and for those furthest from his ideals, he was also a close student of politics. Had life moulded him for a political career he would undoubtedly have made his mark.

Patriotic to a degree, he welcomed enthusiastically any fine utterance made by the King or leading statesman. ‘He would be,’ says his son, ‘in a whirlwind of indignation if he thought that some stroke of British policy was likely wrongly to affect any Eastern peoples or to lower British prestige in the eyes of the world. He could not bear to think that British rule was not the best and kindest ever known in history, and considered that no colonists came up to those of his own nation.’

Again, his choice was to be with the people; he never ‘stooped,’ but made himself one with them,

living out in actual life-long practice what is otherwise too often mere words. Yet, when forced by Salvation Army interests to meet leaders of thought, whether religious or secular, he did so with an easy grace and simplicity which gained for him at once their confidence and friendship.

'He ought,' says one of his sons reflectively, 'to have done more for intellectual people, but he did not realize his power with the highly educated—and there was always the impassable barrier between his chosen style of living and that of the well-to-do.'

And yet, when the Commissioner met distinguished men his personality undoubtedly impressed them deeply. He came in touch with men of widely differing views, and had we records of his conversations with British statesmen, such as the late Earl Grey, and with the leading Sociologists of the world, as well as with some of the high dignitaries of the Anglican and Roman and Greek Churches, they would have made deeply interesting reading.

Archbishop Davidson, shortly before the Commissioner's death, received him most cordially. They met to discuss questions relating to the East, and Railton, by the Archbishop's invitation, remained to luncheon at the Palace. The Archbishop recalled and referred to a previous meeting when Archbishop Tate—to whom he was then Domestic Chaplain—had given the Commissioner an interview at which he had been present.

Undoubtedly, had he so desired, Railton could have made a name for himself as a speaker. But from his earliest days he deliberately and of set purpose turned from the thought as a temptation which would spoil his usefulness. His deeply-rooted objection to formalism and what he felt to be 'ruts and grooves' strengthened as the years went on, though—as he acknowledged—his extreme views became later somewhat modified. He dreaded lest The Salvation Army should eventually work upon certain prescribed lines only, ceasing to adapt itself to the

masses by continually inventing some new departure to attract their vagrant fancy.

While he deplored the fact that to a certain extent he 'had to conform to an established form of service,' he always aimed at 'violating it from the beginning of every Meeting, enough to break up the customs that interfere with perfect liberty.' He says:

'I never now read long lessons, or read anything at all, when I think that (as in many countries) the mere production of a book, even God's Book, will hinder more than help the reception of its contents. I never read at the time people expect it. I break in upon them with such reading just when I think it will be most helpful, and then work in my own speaking at such a time as I think will give me the best number of minutes in any given case to produce the impression I desire. And I constantly remind my hearers that I am there, not to deliver a speech, but to see to their deliverance by God from sin, or bondage, or weight.'

'Suppose,' he would say again, 'that I had thirty minutes in which to speak in my Meeting, I should break it up into three short talks of ten minutes each, with plenty of singing and testimony in between.'

Who that has watched Railton in his public work can forget him? In some Meetings before speaking he would take off his coat, fold and place it deliberately over a chair-back, then with his coarse red jersey well pulled down, advance to the front and deliver his message in the style his comrades knew so well. His short sentences, his simple words, his voice, loud as though in an Open-Air, his gestures, arms and hands used freely to emphasize and arrest, and his ceaseless walking to and fro, sometimes leaving the platform and standing on a seat among his congregation the better to reach them—all this was characteristic of the man and helped to enforce his words.

The following extract from his book 'Heathen England' gives us the Commissioner's idea of a Salvation Army address in a crowded theatre and of the Prayer Meeting which follows:

'You can talk to them as though you were standing with each one alone, face to face. Every one seems to be facing you, as if there were only the two of you present. Now, for life or for death, deal with that poor soul! Tell him of his sin and danger till he quails before you. Tell him, then, of the Saviour's love for him, till you feel as though he cannot go away without giving God his heart. Plead with him as with your own brother. What stillness! What solemnity! Surely there are but two? No, there are thousands, and yet every one of them is directly engaged with you, as though no one else were nigh. O my God, save, I beseech Thee! "Amen! Amen! Amen!" bursts forth from a hundred hearts at once. They have caught the magnetism of your feeling for that *one* you seem all along to be dealing with, and they feel as though all Heaven and earth were awaiting the decision of one man there.

'Now, then, if you want to have that man and woman saved you are as sure of them as if they were closeted with you alone! They never dreamt of anything like this when they came into the theatre. They came to see what a theatre Service was like, and now the Spirit of God has fallen upon their consciences till they feel as though they neither dare stop nor go. A little personal persuasion, in the power of faith and prayer, and they will come anywhere, do anything, to find peace for their wretched souls.'

'Then after describing how to gather the praying people together at the front, and suitable persons ready to deal with sinners, he goes on:

'Then let everybody go down before God. No looking about, much less conversation, permitted, except on the part of those whose business it is to gather any sinners from the pit on to the stage, or to direct them there to Christ.

'Then give a man the opportunity by one bold step to finish the conflict raging in his breast, and at the same time to submit himself, like a child, to his God; then he wants a place to pray. It is not your talk to him, or his to you, that is to do the main part of the work. It is his intercourse with God that must determine whether he goes away pardoned or not.

'Let only people who know how to help a poor seeking soul to reason with God, so as to get the scarlet stains

washed away *now*, speak to anxious ones, and let all be as perfectly under the direction of one mind and will as in the preaching Service.'

The Commissioner's Councils, like his Meetings, were peculiarly his own and far from being patterned alike. A Staff Officer gives us a very good idea of one of his Councils:

'He once led a most memorable Officers' Meeting for me when I was a District Officer. Many of my Officers had never heard "R." before, and they sat round him like bottles ready to be filled! None of us will ever forget to our latest day what really happened!

'He took out his little Bible and read the verse, "I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me." He broke off at once to dwell on the word "cried," describing a frightened child crying at night and the mother's visit to it. Only because the child *cried*! No fine words needed, no wisdom.

'*"Now,"* said "R.," *"we are going to cry unto the Lord."* We got down on our knees, and an extraordinary power came into the Meeting as he kept us praying, praying, praying. He literally taught the Officers how to pray as though they were children. He seemed unable to rest till he knew that every heart had come close to God and been blessed.

'Then he rose and said, "Now we will go out to the crowd." He led them straight to a rough spot, where a large crowd soon gathered, and there led a real Salvation Meeting in the open air. And though he had not shown us any of the wonderful ability we had been expecting to see, the day was a turning-point in many an Officer's life.'

The following illustrates the impression he made on young Salvationists, and is from the pen of an erstwhile Cadet at Clapton:

'An address or lecture by Commissioner Railton was an event in the ordered days of our life as Cadets, for he was infrequently in England then. We were curious to see and hear him with the ardent curiosity of the young concerning the gifted and famous. There was scarcely one to whom his name was unfamiliar, though his international pioneering labours withdrew him considerably from our midst in the United Kingdom.

“ ‘Commissioner Railton? He’s the man who used to be always with The General,’ ” was the reply to an inquiry, and something in the tone told he was different from others. Something of the saint, something of the genius, something not quite understandable was expressed in the way Salvationists spoke his name.

‘ When we looked upon and listened to him we felt the goodness, talent, character, and the elusive, inward withdrawal of the man. The first impression was one of intense kindness. The dark eyes under the big brows had a soft glow of tenderness that was intensified by the smiling lips.

‘ Next came such a certainty of his humility as was overwhelming. He never referred to himself except from the standpoint of his spiritual experiences, and he blazed with wrath over the indignities to which sin exposed our Saviour and the lukewarmness of some professing Christians. But humility emanated from all he did and was in every movement. He had given himself entirely to God’s service; he had fought, and still was fighting, hard battles with temptation. He was sincere; he was clever—his thoughts and ideas went deeper, farther, higher than those of ordinary persons; he hated sin and the Devil with a fierce hatred. He loved humanity and gloried in being brother to the worst. He had conquered the delights of comfort in eating, living, sleeping. He was erratic, impulsive, naturally opposed to organization and ordered extension, and, could he have followed his bent, would have had every Soldier of Christ a houseless wanderer, preaching in the open whithersoever he was led. He was grateful to The General and The Salvation Army for the utilization and guidance of his life.

‘ All this we knew by instinct—the intuition that belongs to youth and is given partly for protection. He had said no word to us that had not dealt with measures for keeping our soul’s health with consecration to God, the need of the world for Salvation, the truth of the Gospel, and the mighty door of spiritual opportunity The Salvation Army opened for its Officers.

‘ He bowed his fine, greying head to us, a mark of reverence for those set apart for Christ, the quick, strange, tender smile spread like light over his face, and he turned to go. Our hearts went after him.

'We were sure that he was a man before whom we should tremble if we were insincere or wilful wrongdoers; that his love for us, The Army, and the world was for the mass and did not singularize the individuals; that he was a roamer, a visionary, oft immersed in dreams wherein we did not enter; but that he was a man strong in faith, wholly at the foot of the Cross.

'He had so much of youth in his mind! He had lifted and enlarged our conception of God. He had shown us the power to serve and suffer which Christ had bestowed on His servants in The Salvation Army. His was not an ordered, logically perfect, sectionized lecture, but a simple revelation of lessons learned by prayer and practice in the service of the Lord. He had encouraged those conscious of impulsiveness or eccentricity to believe these traits could be curbed and disciplined to usefulness, and unsuspectingly had given us such a glimpse of the heroes who in The Army's first years left all to follow as will last till we meet "R." once again in the morning of the Day that will have no night.'

On Railton's influence in the Council chamber, or when discussing far-reaching questions of policy with his leaders and the International Commissioners, we do not here propose to touch. During later years, owing to a variety of causes, his grasp on the executive and official side of The Salvation Army life lessened, but his influence and the power of his personality over many of the rank and file of the Organization remained, and the example of his own life and consecration to definite soul-saving became always more valuable, whether he was in a distant land or at Queen Victoria Street, London.

Though admitting the necessity for the International Headquarters, it must be owned that the Commissioner only endured his existence when obliged to pass his days at 'I.H.Q.,' and that he was ever eager to be off and away from office or administrative duties, unfettered and free. Nevertheless, when engaged on important literary work, he was often for months at a time to and fro between London and his home at Margate.

The principles which prevented his becoming a great speaker in the ordinary sense of the word also governed his writings:

‘Why need I bother myself in writing any more than in speaking as to style or other people’s opinion? Writing with a single eye, and aiming every sentence at the one object, I shall find my level and hit hard upon that level!’

So he wrote to The Founder while still employed in Middlesbrough, outlining, in a sentence, the ideal on which his literary work was based to the end.

That he both ‘found his level and hit hard’ is abundantly proved by the files of Salvation Army publications, to say nothing of his books and pamphlets, many of which have been translated into a number of languages. He made use of fine, strong, Saxon English, using, wherever possible, words of one syllable, and clothing his thoughts in a simplicity which made them intelligible to the least educated.

Once at an Officers’ Council in London, The Founder, alluding to Commissioner Railton’s absence through illness, said how much he missed him, and paid a high tribute to his ability as a writer. ‘I have never asked Railton to do or write anything,’ he added, ‘without his immediately and cheerfully attempting to carry out my wishes. I believe if I were to ask him to write an article on “scissors” he would do it, and do it well!’

Railton’s capacity for editorial and literary work was enormous, and the power and blessing which attended his writings will never be fully known. The question put to some veteran Officer, ‘What led you to give your life to Salvation Army work?’ brings again and again the reply, ‘Commissioner Railton’s appeal in “The War Cry”’; or, ‘I settled it after reading what Railton said about the need’; while for many years the articles signed ‘R.’ were messages to both saint and sinner—quick and living with the power of God.

He never went away from London without taking a certain amount of literary work with which to fill in chinks of spare time. The following is a specimen of one such memorandum :

' Twelve articles, as already suggested in letters from me for " All the World." '

' Revision of Mrs. Booth's Exeter Hall Addresses for a book, . . . say 35,000 words. '

' Some new matter for " Social Gazette " and papers. '

' Continue interviews in " Cry. " '

' A series of papers on Salvation Army doctrine with a view to helping the weak-kneed brethren; e.g. '

' *The Atonement*—from the point of view of the " eye " illustration (Hill). '

' *Degrees of Punishment*. '

' *Eternity* and eternal existence—and eternal *sin* involving eternal penalty for that sin. '

' Complete Social Appeal and General's Life, and review latter for all our leading " Crys " (different points of view); e.g. U.S.A., Australia, Sweden, etc. '

' Small selection of The General's Sermons. '

' Prefaces to " Warriors' Library " books. '

A constant demand, too, was made for his help on behalf of the various Editors of Army papers. Wherever he went ' begging letters ' followed him. Seldom indeed did he fail to respond. If he promised an article by a certain date, the manuscript would be there to time.

He was an extremely rapid writer; too hurried, if anything, in later years. Had he been able to restrain his speed, and to make more use of his great experience and fine reasoning powers, the effect of his work would have been greatly increased. But—and herein he set an example to contributors the world over—though amongst the very foremost of all Salvation Army writers, he was never the least ' touchy ' at being criticized or ' edited. '

' We felt able,' says one of the English editors, ' to bring him back a paper and ask for its alteration,

with a freedom that could be shown to few other writers. Commissioner Railton was always ready to re-do and would hand his MS. to us, saying cheerfully, "Hope this is more what you want; if not, tell me and I'll try again, or else you alter it to suit."

He was ever ready to fill a gap in paper or magazine, or to supply the place of some defaulter whose promised article had not come to time. Nowhere is the memory of Commissioner Railton more honoured than in our Editorial circles all round the world.

The Commissioner was generous, too, with respect to the literary work of others, as the following to Commissioner Booth-Tucker, author of the two-volume *Life of The Army Mother*, clearly shows:

'O biographer, live for ever! Then we can all die in peace, with the assurance that the best will be done that can be to "improve the occasion." I don't pretend yet to have really read that library of life, truth, and wonders in two volumes, but I did not rest till I had gone right through; of course, skipping what I had read anywhere before. I thought that even reading all consecutively could not give to me any idea of the impression likely to be made on a strange mind, so I was delighted with the evident effect upon my Major by his first hour or two of it. . . .

'The reflection "What a little about so much" will, I think, rather be the feeling of all Salvationists, as, with regret, they read the end, rather than any idea that too great a book has been made. . . .

'Well, may God bless the book—I was going to say as much as He should—and the writer! I've a deal of sympathy with our David's prayer when one day he had done well: "Now, Lord, You see how good You can keep me all day if You only try!"

'Now what about your next visit? . . .'

'These people will sing themselves round the world,' said one of the early observers of The Salvation Army. Commissioner Railton, both by his work and example, helped towards the fulfilment of this prophecy, and to the introduction of the songs

which are so integral a part of The Salvation Army. We have seen how his first attempt in the different lands he visited in his early years was to 'prepare a Song Book.' He was himself intensely fond of music, and very musical, never forgetting a tune he had once heard sung or whistled. He had a fine though untrained voice which was ruined by Open-Air fighting earlier in his career.

He was one of the first to adopt the practice of putting religious words to secular tunes, and was quick to catch up and make use of any song popular with the masses. His contributions to this class of Salvation Army songs may be roughly divided into two groups.

First, his own compositions. They have been widely used and are still sung in every quarter of the globe; among them are: 'Shout aloud Salvation, boys!' to 'Marching through Georgia,' and 'Oh! every land is filled with sin' to 'Dixie Land.'

Secondly, the many well-known hymns and religious songs he adapted by putting into them The Army swing and spirit, so giving them new life in its ranks. One of the most successful instances of this is the following adaptation of the hymn 'Angels of Jesus':

Hark, hark! my soul, what warlike songs are swelling
Through all the land, and on from door to door!
How grand the truths those burning strains are telling
Of that great war till sin shall be no more!

Salvation Army, Army of God,
Onward to conquer the world with Fire and Blood.

Yet, strangely enough, during later years in his own Meetings, he never seemed to feel the need of new or original songs, but would be content with such old and tried choruses as 'Draw me nearer,' 'I will follow Thee, my Saviour,' 'Here I bring my all to Thee,' 'Death is coming,' and so on, probably feeling that from such songs as these the best spiritual results were obtainable.

In every land he made the impression of being a

man of song, singing in the homes, the streets, and the railway carriages. His singing some simple chorus over and over into the ear of a drunken man, when travelling on the Continent, is an illustration of his wonderful faith in the effects produced by song. For singing, however, when the words are not distinctly audible, or when the *singers* and not the sinners seemed the object, Railton had scant patience.

A campaign for hooligans with special weekly night Meetings was organized in the winter of 1892 by Commissioner Hoggard, then Provincial Officer for South London. This campaign was after Railton's own heart. Crowds of the very roughest assembled in Kennington Lane Hall, and he was there every Wednesday night, returning about four in the morning to Headquarters, and getting a few hours' sleep on a sofa or shakedown in his office.

One night Commissioner Hoggard sang a rather flowery solo about 'Following Jesus.' The Commissioner fidgeted, seemed hardly able to control his impatience, and the solo had scarcely ended before he was on his feet starting the old chorus:

Oh, the drunkard may come and the swearer may come,
Backsliders and sinners are all welcome home.

He evidently considered this was the style most suited to his audience.

From Brigadier Slater, who was in charge of The Salvation Army Musical Department for many years, we learn that:

'The Commissioner had fears lest the growth and development of instrumental music in The Army were being obtained at the cost of fervour, force, and frequency in public singing. He sought with earnest care to raise warnings and checks against such a danger. He would say to every Bandsman, "Mind you sing as well as play," and to every drummer, "Mind you beat the drum loud, and louder than ever." He never really seems to have found a place for Bands, as such, in his scheme for The Army. He thought that few Meetings or marches required more than a cornet to give the pitch and a drum to mark the time for the songs to be sung. "What good," he used to

exclaim impatiently, "can be accomplished, however perfect the 'quick step,' when no words are heard?" "

It may have been partly for this reason that Railton so gloried in the tiny Open-Airs where a handful were at work, unsupported by a circle of stalwart Bandsmen. The individual Bandsman was precious to the Commissioner, but when assembled in large numbers with shining instruments and beautiful harmonies, he seemed somehow uncomfortable and ill at ease among them.

In a letter to his old friend Colonel Wilson, dated but a few days before his death, he fears lest some special march should be 'fooled away by baby music—drumming and marching like so many geese—not even allowed to quack!'

He had great faith in the power of a voice reaching unseen listeners behind closed doors and windows, and never let slip a chance of holding an Open-Air with plenty of appeal through song in it. His firm conviction, based on incontrovertible experience, was that some of the finest results were gained by singing and talking in a dark and apparently deserted street.

For lack of space we have been obliged to omit many interesting recollections of Railton's doings during later years in Great Britain. Nothing delighted him more than to rush off unannounced to take part in some week-end campaign. Wherever soul-saving work was going on there the Commissioner would seek to lend a hand. Extracts from his letters show how he gloried in accompanying Commissioner Sturgess, or other of the Men's Social Secretaries for the time being, on a tour of the Institutions.

One of his sons gives an account of a visit paid by the Commissioner to one of the Social Institutions at Liverpool at the time when 4.30 a.m. Breakfasts were being provided for destitute men before they went out to seek for work. He writes:

'I went with my father, and watched his method of working. Before the Staff went in to deal with these men

—unemployed or whatever they were, who had been sheltered by The Army for a night—he had them gathered together and said: “Now, you’ll be seeing to these men, giving them food and help. Let us begin by praying for them.” We all knelt and sang and prayed till every one had caught his glow. “Hallelujah!” he cried, jumping up. “Now let’s see the dear men.” As they were eating he went about among them, talking to them. At the close of the meal he prayed most tenderly for them. When leaving he said to the Officer in charge, “Do they know you love them? That you’re after their souls? Warm them, warm them, poor fellows—they need it!”

‘Who hath despised the day of small things?’ asked the prophet Zechariah. Certainly not Commissioner Railton. He gloried in them. The smaller they were the more beautiful in his eyes. Indeed, some of his fellow-Officers considered that he lacked a sense of proportion, giving the cold shoulder to ‘big concerns,’ whilst he lavished all his enthusiasm on the tiny ‘hard go.’

An instance of this comes from one of his great admirers, who asserts that ‘he could be provokingly elusive on occasions.’ A tea and large Meeting for young Salvationists—the children of Officers—from sixteen years old and onwards had been arranged at which he had agreed to be present. All were greatly elated at the prospect of hearing the Commissioner, and lasting results were expected from his words and influence. But at the eleventh hour, to the dismay of the Staff a telegram arrived from a little town some fifty miles distant, announcing that Railton was detained by important work and would not be present that evening. ‘He seemed immensely tickled by our reproaches next time we met,’ says the Officer who tells the story. “‘Oh! I’m certain you managed capitally without me,” he laughed, without a shadow of compunction. “The Lieutenant at — was holding on all by herself. I couldn’t possibly have left her, you know. We had a fine time and roused the place.”’

The Commissioner will be remembered by many as constantly wearing in later years a big yellow cross on his jersey. This was permitted by The Founder for his special use and became a characteristic part of his uniform. Mrs. Railton gives us the origin of this custom: As he travelled so rapidly from one country to another, he liked to have the words 'Salvation Army' worked on his jersey in the language of the land in which he happened to be going at the time. This grew to be quite a task. Almost before 'l'Armée du Salut' was completed it became necessary to embroider 'Leger des Heils' or 'Ejército de Salvación,' 'Heilsarmee,' and so on.

One day he found a solution. 'I know what we'll do. You work a cross on all my jerseys. Every one will understand what that means.' The plan was adopted, and he was delighted to find that it became an introduction to men of the farthest extremes of thought.

CHAPTER XIX

Comrade and Friend

‘Wherever we may be, God grant us grace to persevere to the end in work that does not show, but which somebody must do if The Army is always to be marching along.’—G. S. R.

COMMISSIONER RAILTON’S attitude towards his comrade-Salvationists demands more than a passing reference. ‘Next to the sinner I believe he loved us,’ said a veteran Officer with tear-dimmed eyes; and this was the impression of all his comrades, old and young, in every part of the world. Rank or position counted for little with him. His preference—if he had one—was for the smallest and weakest, as a parent gives his tenderest care to the child who needs him most. This fact often made his rising to speak in Councils or Meetings of Salvationists the occasion for a perfect hurricane of welcome.

One reason for the deep affection with which many Salvation Army Officers regarded him was that, with him, love was always mixed with faith. He aimed at the spiritual uplifting of every Officer he met.

Railton’s delight was to ‘bring out’ some shy, backward sister, and many are the testimonies to his success in that direction. Mrs. Bramwell Booth herself is a notable instance. As a young, inexperienced Lieutenant, she had done little more in Paris than give out a hymn or read a few verses from the Bible; but when the Commissioner announced in a Meeting that she would speak, she says: ‘There was something about him which made me try and say a few words that were not in the Bible or the Song Book. And

the fact that I can now, thirty-five years later, express my thoughts in public is largely due to the encouragement he gave me in those early days in France.'

'When I was a young Officer,' says a well-known Colonel, 'he taught me why he made other people preach and testify instead of doing it all himself. "The Lord has told us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel," he said; "we can't do it without preachers, and the first thing to do is to make them." My wife was a typical example of how he did it. She was a church-woman and a good Christian, but so shy and modest that she could neither speak nor pray in a Meeting. He never rested till she did both with freedom and ease—and she has been doing it ever since!'

An instance of the tactful influence he exercised over young men is given by Lieut.-Colonel Nicholson, of the British Editorial Department, who was then a member of the Household Troops Band* which was dispatched to Canada on the eve of the 1888 Self-Denial Effort.

These young Bandsmen found that they were expected to travel steerage, which in those days and in the *Polynesian* (Allen Line), otherwise the *Rocking Polly*, meant no little roughing it. 'Why should they go steerage when other Officers travelled second class?' they argued, especially as on that particular voyage it meant hammocks instead of bunks—tin cups and plates, and everything else to match! They were inclined to 'kick up rough' when Commissioner Railton, who had been campaigning in the vicinity, arrived to see them. History does not reveal how much he knew of their feelings, but to their surprise he congratulated them warmly on being sent steerage. This proved, he said, that their leaders knew their spirit, and remembered the tramping they had done from town to town in connexion with their campaigns. Their reputation for hard work, self-denial, and real

* A Band composed of young fellows, mostly Candidates for Officership, who took part in campaigns throughout Great Britain, visiting many different centres.

Salvation grit had brought them the privilege of travelling among the very people they were out to help and bless!

'His way of looking at things,' says the Lieut.-Colonel, 'struck us all in a new light. The Commissioner carried our judgment. We Bandsmen felt better men for having met him, and we marched on board the *Rocking Polly* with heads erect, proud of the honour conferred upon us!'

His help, too, was as varied as it was practical. Often has a woman-Officer come downstairs in the morning to find her fire brightly burning, coal and water to hand, and shoes all nicely cleaned—the work of an early rising Commissioner. Many such incidents are before us, but he was the last to allow them to be mentioned. His pity was never of the 'pity without relief' kind. Times without number we hear of his taking the place of tired Officers while they rested.

'Believe me, I beg of you, there is no need to meet me,' he writes to a woman-Officer in France. 'I shall find you very easily, and I do not want to add uselessly to your walks and waitings in this winter weather.' 'Don't worry that you are not feeling up to the mark, or that you have a cold,' runs another piece of fatherly advice. 'I have lungs enough for the two of us.'

Mrs. Commandant Revel, wife of an Italian Officer, dwells with thankfulness on the Commissioner's visit to her country in 1897. The Salvation Army work was difficult, hard, and uphill, and she but a young, inexperienced Lieutenant. Railton gave her wise and helpful counsel, and took great interest in her progress.

One day he noticed the Lieutenant going out with her bundle of 'Grido di Guerra,' and in order to help her he took forty copies of her paper to sell himself on the crowded Boulevard. When at last he returned he was asked how many he had disposed of. 'Hallelujah!' he answered with a beaming smile, 'I have had the pleasure of offering them.' He had not succeeded in selling a single copy.

‘How many times since then,’ adds Mrs. Revel, ‘when I have at great cost done what I felt to be my duty without having seen any result whatever, the Commissioner’s words have come back to me. The memory of his joyful conquering look and the very tone of his voice, in spite of his lack of success, have brought me cheer and encouragement. I have thought, “Hallelujah! Like you, dear Commissioner, I have had the pleasure of doing my best!”’

Self-sacrificing and even ascetic as he was, few priests or heathen devotees have passed through an experience of fasting more severe than the Commissioner—he was ever on the look-out for other people’s comfort and ease. His heart instantly responded with sympathy to any tale of woe, whether the persons themselves were to blame for their troubles or not.

‘He invited himself to tea with us,’ says an Officer’s wife in Java. ‘Whilst there he tried to find out what the couple needed, and how he could best help them. Several improvements were the outcome of his visit, both to these and to other Officers.’

We hear of him taking his work home in the middle of an afternoon in order to escort a sick Officer’s wife to her suburban destination. We see him going out of his way and adding a wearisome round when abroad to visit the relatives of some English Officers, knowing the pleasure it would give both sides to hear of each other direct.

We find him rushing breathlessly into a cottage only a few moments before his train for the Continent was due to leave. An old comrade’s wife and children were alone. Railton fell on his knees, prayed with them, and vanished. But the influence he left behind was worth all the trouble and haste.

Such little things as these, added to his gentle and innate fine feeling, made people say: ‘He was a saint.’ Nor was this spirit a passing phase of the Commissioner’s experience. ‘He was always the same,’ is the testimony we hear from all sides. ‘I have known him for more than thirty years,’ says

one, 'and met him constantly, and I have never seen any difference in him during all that time.'

The younger generation of Officers bear witness to the truth of what their fathers say, for Railton's faith and love for beginners was ever inspiring. Three months before his death he met two young women-Cadets from the International Training Garrison on their way to a small Corps. He stopped and spoke to them, and as one of them says:

'He seemed so interested that I ventured to invite him to our Meeting. We were only five at the Open-Air, but a number of men came out of a public-house to listen to his earnest words. He also attracted attention on the way to the Hall by waving his cap and shouting messages of invitation to all. He would listen to no thanks, but promised to come again at night. "I have found an ideal spot for work," he said.

'We wondered where he was going to spend the two hours' interval between Meetings, so I asked him if he was going home. He said no, it was too far, but that he would be all right. We asked if he would join us, and he joyfully consented. How honoured we were, just we two Sergeants, two Cadets, and the Commissioner; and what a tea meeting that was! He talked to us like a father, and when we had finished he asked us to get our Song Books and have a sing. And sing we did! Then we had a Prayer Meeting round the table which we shall never forget.

'To his joy, six grown-up people and four children gave themselves to God in the Meeting. Nobody knew he was working at that little Corps; nobody knew he would have walked about instead of having his tea, and nobody knew he spent so much time with the children. Not half his beautiful life will ever be known. We treasure that day as amongst the most sacred in our experience.'

As we have seen, however burdened or rushed the Commissioner might be, he never forgot the value of the human touch, nor neglected the comradely act or word which means so much. Yet it must be remembered that for many years his freedom from definite or exacting appointments peculiarly fitted him for this kind of 'free-lance' work. His was a unique position,

and scarcely a door or heart in the world-wide Army but would be thrown open in answer to his knock.

His admiration for the self-sacrifice and devotion of the women Officers who give their lives to the uplifting of their sisters was ever deep and reverent, and he grasped every chance of showing in a practical way his appreciation of the Women's Social Work.

In The Salvation Army Officers of whatever rank are expected also to be members of the Corps near which they live. Commissioner Railton took this part of his obligation most seriously, and as an Officer remarked on hearing of his death, 'The Army has lost its model Soldier.'

The Officers in charge of the Margate Corps tell us the same. They loved him for his help and cheer. Considering his strenuous work it might have been supposed that when he came home it would be to rest, to lie fallow for a season. But even when forced to do this he never failed to make both Officers and Soldiers feel that he was one with them and—not only in name but in deed—a fellow-Soldier.

It was the Commissioner's invariable habit on his return to Margate after his long tours, we are told, to visit the Officers' Quarters at the first available opportunity. His coming was always a season of holy fellowship and blessing.

He had a wonderful memory, and would question them as to the spiritual condition of various Soldiers, anxiously inquiring about the soul-saving work in the Corps. His visits concluded with a little Prayer Meeting, the Commissioner dropping on his knees and starting some simple Army chorus.

'When at home and he could manage to tear himself away from his desk,' says another of his Commanding Officers, 'he could always be relied upon to attend the Open-Air Meetings. He was rather sensitive, however, about coming to the inside Meetings, fearing that the attention of the people would be centred on him as a Commissioner and not on his message. He therefore preferred proclaiming Salvation in the Open-Air and on the sands.'

'The final glimpse treasured by many of the Margate Soldiers is of the Commissioner kneeling on the sands in the evening light, pleading to God with upraised hands for the Salvation of the people.'

'Personally,' continues this Officer, 'I shall never forget him. Once when I lay ill at the Quarters he somehow got to hear of it on the Saturday night. He appeared at Knee-Drill on the Sunday morning, and said to my wife, "Here I am; I will be the Lieutenant to-day. It is you and I for it." He put in a strenuous day's work, taking part in every Meeting both outdoors and in. And he managed also to call at the Quarters to see me.'

'He was deeply interested in the Young People, and always made a point of encouraging any who had not yet started to testify in the Open-Air.'

The following is a letter of welcome from the Commissioner to his new Officer:

'MY DEAR CAPTAIN,—Mrs. Railton so urges on me your need of a little quiet that I report myself thus, instead of coming as I generally do.'

'Should it suit you, however, to call at any time, I am looking forward to the pleasure of intercourse with you, and I would gladly walk out with you, or stay in, just as might suit you best.'

'In any case, I look forward to being with you (both of us, I hope) to the Watch-Night, and myself on Sunday—though with the usual amount of uncertainty as to being called away any day.'

'And I dare say you know already that when I come to any Meeting it is with readiness either to enjoy it silently or to take any part my Commanding Officer wishes.'

'God grant you both rest and victory this week.'

'Your Soldier,

'G. S. RAILTON.'

Under a life-like picture of him in the Margate Hall is a brass plate giving a short epitome of the Commissioner's career, finishing with the following words: 'Who will follow Christ as he did?'

From his own experience Railton knew well the battle Officers have to wage with loneliness, ill health, and the temptation to discouragement. He knew, too,

the value of a letter at such times, and one use of his ready pen during all the forty years of fighting lay in continual short private notes to all fellow-workers, and especially when he thought they were hard pressed.

The Mother of The Salvation Army was cheered by these tiny messages, sometimes passed to her even on the platform when he knew she was shrinking from some special ordeal of speaking.

Many letters remain from other members of the Booth family testifying to his helpful correspondence. Commissioner Lucy Booth-Hellberg, who was still a child and regarded him as a beloved uncle when he came to live in her home, wrote from Denmark, of which she was at that time Territorial Leader :

'How your kind letter brought up the days of long, long ago, when I used to sit on your knee and you used to cut out my paper dolls. . . .

'Won't you write something for our Christmas "Cry"? You can write about our Christmases together, when I was your "Little Lulu" and you were "Uncle Railton," if you like.'

Commander Eva Booth, Leader of The Salvation Army Work in the United States of America, dwells affectionately on his kindness to her as a child. She says :

'When he lived with us I had to have the first spoonful of his egg at breakfast! He insisted on buying me a new hoop and stick at the beginning of each winter, even though the old one might still be in existence. Little as he cared for pets, he scoured London in order to get me a small, white woolly dog.'

The Commander often refers in her Officers' Meetings to Railton's example. She tells us that in later years his letters were among the outstanding inspirations of her life. The last of them reached her after his death, breathing the same spirit and originality which had made such an impression upon her childhood's experience.

But of the cheery notes sent to far-away Missionary Officers or to those who were in trying circumstances at home there can be no record, for rarely a day passed without some such helpful message being dispatched. In scores of homes to-day scraps of his delicate, almost illegible, writing are treasured. The following is an extract from one, as a specimen of many :

‘ There is always to me such a fund of comfort in the complement of unparalleled suffering and difficulty that I cannot help looking upon the most unpleasant things as marks of signal favour. “ He hath not dealt so with any people ” is the eternal mark of the true Israel, who can never attain in this world to what God is always leading them, and who will only in eternity find out the incalculable “ weight of glory ” they have heaped up by the process of battle and agony and loss here.

‘ And after all, we have only to consider how God can make the most of our “ frame.” That strikes me as a singularly apt expression when you feel as if you had no inside ! ’

We have seen the Commissioner’s affectionate regard for young Officers, and for the burdened or weary in their work. This record would be incomplete were we not also to glance at the love and consideration he bestowed on those who from one reason or another had become known to their comrades as ‘ ex-Officers ’ ; that is, those who had ceased to hold Officer rank in The Salvation Army.

While in his early days ready summarily to dispense with all Salvationists who failed to come up to his standard of devotion, the Commissioner became increasingly considerate to those who dropped out of the ranks while still retaining the true Army spirit. As early as 1886 he writes on this subject to The Founder :

‘ I am inclined to go in specially for a Mission to “ fallen ” Officers—excluding, of course, such reprobates as ——. There is a peculiar pleasure in pulling titbits out of the Devil’s mouth.’

And a few days later :

‘ There is any amount to be seen and said about our losses and failures through the stupidity, or worse, of Officers. But it is no use worrying on the subject. God remembers we are—dust—and He must look out for His own Kingdom accordingly. It will be all the more glorious when built with rich material ! ’

But although convinced that ‘ it was no use worrying,’ the Commissioner’s heart was ever filled with sympathy for comrades who had slipped and failed to recover themselves, and he writes to his wife on one occasion :

‘ I am glad I had to go to Glasgow by land instead of sea, as if I had not got to the ——’s they would have resigned and left us entirely. Poor things, how they did sob ! I have finally arranged for him to go to our house on Tuesday if he can.’

He writes again :

‘ I have invited the ——’s to go to our house with their family. I have done this because I know it is so vital to keep hold of them until we get them fairly on their feet again. I have denied myself of our home to ourselves for the time being, and my poor little wife must agree ! ’

The testimonies to the success of his efforts in this direction have come in from all parts of the world. An Adjutant’s wife writes :

‘ You know, ex-Officers often walk about with very sore hearts, but when Commissioner Railton met us at any place, whether in London or elsewhere, he always went out of his way to shake hands with us and make us feel that he understood and knew that we still loved the Lord. Then he came to ——, and heard that we were there. He left the Officers with whom he was, and came mounting the stairs that led to our Quarters. We were in the middle of cleaning and having dinner in our kitchen, with the place all upset. He insisted upon sitting down and having dinner with us, which was cheese, apples, bananas, and bread and butter. He made himself so happy, and made us happy also. *He had no need to come to us*—it was really out of his way—but he did it.’

Another writes :

'I was an Officer in England, now in America, and obliged to resign through ill health, but my heart was always in the Work. After leaving The Army I married, and my husband's business took us to the States. One time the Officers wanted billets. They asked if we would billet Commissioner Railton. My husband had never had a Salvationist in his home before, and he had never known that I had been one.

'I opened my heart to the Commissioner, told of my love to The Army, and said how sorry I was my health had failed, and so on. He said, "I have been in your home two or three days, my girl, and I believe that if God wants you in The Army again He will call your husband also. I have seen him; he is a good man. Do your duty for God, do all the work that lies in your power in the Church to which you now belong. So many people make a mistake by doing nothing for God because they cannot do a lot. Do not talk 'Army' to your husband, but keep praying and working for God."

'I took his advice, and did all I could. One day my husband came in and said, "I feel I must offer my life to God for service in The Army." I said, "How long have you felt like this?" He said, "I have felt it more than a year, and I did not like to tell you, because I did not think you would like to give up your home." "I have been praying for this for ten years," I said.'

We have done little more than touch upon the Commissioner's Salvation Army dealings with Officers, passing over altogether his work for the Soldiers, whether Local Officers or privates. But they share to the full in the 'family relationship' with which the Commissioner regarded them, and in practically every Corps he visited his memory is cherished with reverence and affection. One letter to a veteran Salvationist at Bristol we cannot forbear quoting almost in full. It is not only a letter of cheer to a sick Soldier-comrade, but a little bit of his own soul history :

'DEAR OLD COMRADE,—Brigadier —— has just been telling me of his little sight of you. Your very name brings a thrill of joy to old comrades scattered now all over the world,

as to me, and I rejoice always to remember how God continues to bless things that had been done long ago to His glory.

‘That we should be violently attacked by the enemy when we get down into that state of weakness which keeps us to our room I always consider a great compliment and a certificate to the side he knows us to be on, for he does not trouble with people who get cold towards our loving Master.

‘We shall know by and by far better than we can here how precious to Him were the struggles that we had thus to fight out almost alone. But I trust He may spare you much of that inner conflict and darkness which so many of His loved ones have to pass through.

‘Whatever we may feel, thank God the great facts remain always unaltered. He came to our help when we were hopelessly in the enemy’s power. He set us free because He loved to do it, and He has kept us free when, alas! so many have fallen again under the power of the enemy. And however weak we may be, God has laid help on the Mighty One who never fails nor is discouraged, and who will never leave us, even when it may seem as if He had done so.

‘What a joy it is also to think of the victorious career of so many whom you have helped at the dear old Bristol Corps and who have gone about glorifying God and helping others all over the world! We can never know till we get Home how God will divide the spoil; but I feel sure we shall see many a stay-at-home comrade get a big share of the joys that have been apparently gained by those who were privileged to appear much more before the eyes of others.

‘It is all, thank God, one great eternal partnership, and in many a silent chamber God goes on, from hour to hour, to glorify Himself in the persistent love of those who just keep clinging to Him when they can no longer stand up for Him publicly.

‘How should we ever have been able to do permanent good anywhere if we could not have relied upon Him to help His ransomed ones in all these solitary conflicts at home? May He continue to the end blessedly to manifest Himself to you and yours!’

And this was all work by the way, little odds and ends for which he was in no manner responsible, except that ‘the love of Christ constraineth us.’

CHAPTER XX

Railton and His Children

‘May the image of God become more and more visible in us, so that we may be found satisfactory to Him at all times.’—G. S. R.

THIS record would be incomplete were all reference to the Commissioner’s family life omitted. Considerable interest always centred round his home. Some of his comrades thought it strange that he should possess a home at all, so constantly on the wing did he appear to be. Mrs. Railton and the children came in also for a certain amount of commiseration, the Commissioner’s views and manner of living being so pronounced and original. But, according to both wife and children, ‘never was pity more wasted.’

Instead of the exacting or selfish spirit sometimes found in those whose standards in public are of the highest, the Commissioner, Mrs. Railton tells us, was ‘a saint at home. He was as good as you all thought him and better,’ she said, as she stood beside his coffin. ‘I never in all these years saw in him one inconsistent action.’

Grateful, content, anxious always to save and not to make work, his only regret seemed that his wife was so tied by home duties as to be unable to take her share in active service.

As the babies grew into childhood the parents’ views respecting their upbringing did not always agree. The Commissioner was for the hardy upbringing, while the extreme delicacy of the children made Mrs. Railton—encouraged as she was by some leading

medical men of the day—adopt far different measures. Certainly unusual care was needed to keep them in the land of the living. This he had to admit, when, as a young father, he writes to his wife :

‘ I don’t believe one word of anybody’s theories about babies. Still, when they are sick it is a good job there are little women in the world. I know I find it so, even a little anxious tearaway thing like you ! ’

‘ I hope,’ this letter continues, ‘ that David is being allowed to tumble about the sands, either naked or in such clothes that neither parents nor guardians object to any amount of dirt. Life without plenty of dirt is not worth a boy’s while; so please make up your mind to that, and arrange for it ! ’

Being at home at such irregular intervals, the Commissioner was quite incapable of carrying through any scheme he might formulate for his children’s upbringing; and thus it came about that the training and education of the family were entirely left to Mrs. Railton. The rules were hers, and all questions referred to her for decision.

Mrs. Railton’s position must have been difficult. The Commissioner’s one desire and expectation was, of course, that his children should be fitted for service in The Salvation Army. No other career was possible for them in his eyes. He was little at home, and in his optimistic way dreamed on of the happy days when—with his family around him—they would work side by side in some heathen land or continental city, under the Flag he loved so well.

Yet his wife could not but face the fact that the children were highly strung and nervous in no ordinary degree, and she would often ask herself how the three—even if they so desired—could possibly support a life of strain and stress such as her husband gloried in.

Railton had his own views of education, from which he never swerved. The following opinions were given as his mature judgment after sixty years’ experience of life :

‘ Certain I am that the entire programme of English

schools, based as it is upon the after-demands of universities, is as foolish as it can well be, and that I learned all that was of real value in spite of, rather than thanks to, the excellent school to which I was sent.

'To fool away one's best hours and powers in pretending to learn something of languages no longer spoken even among scholarly men, and to aim at passing examinations that make demands rather on the memory than on any other faculty, is the one pathway into which I fear to this day English lads who go beyond the elementary schools are led. What insanity it all is, as contrasted with the systems I find adopted on the Continent, and which, whatever their defects, produce lads capable of the most rapid practical use of several European languages, or of striking into any course of technical or scientific learning that will fit them for whatsoever calling they may be destined.

'I cannot doubt that it was God Himself who guided me so as to fit me best with what He had planned. To this day I am content to know nothing of the names of those wonderful rivers "on" which the geography informs us that most of the country towns are found (on maps, I suppose), provided I know what railways will get me to them from any other point. And I am content for any child to surpass me in accuracy as to the dates when some useless king began and ended his reign, if I can only feel sure I know who have and have not done much for England and why they helped or hindered it.'

Pronounced as his theories might be, the Commissioner was unable to get them carried out. In his prolonged absences the children came naturally under the care and influence of relations on their mother's side, and when the Railtons finally settled at Margate, the boys attended a school in which they received an education wholly different from that which their father would have chosen for them. This being the case, Railton had sympathy with his children's progress at school only in so far as this was likely to be of use later.

'We had,' says David, 'a sort of Bible-reading gathering at school, and he was keen on that. Also we used to have a debating society in order to

encourage members to express their thoughts on any given subject without preparation. Slips of paper were handed round with the topic on which we had to speak. I remember receiving one with "Bull Fights" on it. I stood up and slanged those Bull Fights for about ten minutes. Father was tremendously pleased at that.'

Their study of modern languages and music was a delight to him. The brothers have lively recollections of the Commissioner's appreciation of his powers as a pianist, and as they tell us:

'Indifferent playing, or not quite knowing the tune, did not matter; but he would keep us there strumming as well as we could while he sang for as long as we would stay, often till mother would exclaim in distress, "Oh, you *must* stop that now!" He expected us to sing with him in French or German, and when we were tired he would continue singing hymns in Swedish, Italian, Dutch, or Norwegian, so as to keep up his different languages.'

'After singing, perhaps "War Cry" reading might be called his great home recreation,' says Mrs. Railton. Whenever he went home he would have enormous bundles of foreign 'War Crys' sent after him. Established in his chair, with little chairs and stools loaded with piles of 'War Crys' all around him, he would sit and read by the hour, making notes and comments all the time. 'They have had so many souls in America—so many in Canada! Ah! dear Sweden is going ahead,' and so on often far into the night.

'The one thing about him that tried us,' say his children, 'was that he would assume that we were as natural in our religion as he was. For instance, at prayers he would put us on to pray, no matter what mood we were in. But his family prayers were always a sort of natural home-gathering, with God in the midst of us, and a boy could be the leader as well as the Commissioner. Not until years later did his great difference from all others dawn upon us.'

In many ways the Commissioner was wise in dealing with his children. 'If he saw religious enthusiasm or

joy,' we hear, ' he would encourage it with a sentence, and leave it, never tactlessly keeping on about it. For instance, I would often come back from school singing. He would not notice it at first, but one night, perhaps, I would be silent. Then he would say, " I miss that song to-night; it's fine to hear a boy sing." Then silence, no preaching, or " rubbing in " such as boys resent.'

And yet there were times when his extreme measures must have tested his school-boy sons severely. It was, for example, the Commissioner's custom to observe the daily 12.30 prayer hour. He would fall upon his knees on the Parade, in the train, or city, no matter where, and pray aloud. He often offered a missionary prayer for the conversion of the world, united in spirit with Turk, distant Salvationists, and International Headquarters. Any one with him, whoever it might be, had, as one of his sons observes, ' to make the best of it. At any rate, it taught us to shut our eyes in order that we might not see the surprised expression of the children and grown-ups passing by. But nothing he ever did of this kind seemed " professional " or a form; it was part of the walk, and most natural. One minute he would talk with us or to one of our school friends, and the next minute to his Father in Heaven.'

Whilst in most matters the Commissioner left the reins in Mrs. Railton's hands, yet when required to do so, he asserted his authority as head of the family.

' No boy,' says David, ' could feel that he had anything approaching to a quick temper, but when we were inclined to disobey or have our own way, we knew " there will be a racket if you don't look out." The only occasion upon which he showed anything approaching severity was once when mother called me, and I replied, " I can't come just now." Next thing I heard was a tremendous shout, " When your mother calls, come *at once*." It was a shout, the only time I ever heard it.'

That the Commissioner's standard for his boys was

nigh we see from the following entry in an autograph book started by one of them. The book was sent to Paris, where he then was, with a request that he would fill in the first page. Railton did so, but the boy confesses that he found his father's inscription to be something of 'a damper' both to himself and to future contributors. It ran as follows:

'May God ever keep my sons separate from the silly butterfly crowd who write in or read albums merely as a pastime of idlers!

'May they ever belong to the more "old-fashioned" sort who seek Divine wisdom and help to use every possible opportunity for His glory and the Salvation of souls!

'Rue Auber 3. Paris.

G. S. RAILTON.'

It seems as though the Commissioner's opinion of autograph albums became modified with time. For the following, written by him in the book of the daughter of the house where he was staying, is a message of which any autograph seeker might be proud:

'May God so guide and help you that you may cause multitudes who are to-day prayerless and homeless to enjoy homes as heavenly and charming as your own home has been. But may you remain ever glad for the sake of others to leave any home or any country.'

It is from Railton's own letters to his children—from which we can only take some brief extracts—that we see the place which in those early years they held in his heart and life, however distant he might be from home. These letters are amongst the most cherished possessions of his children to-day. No doubt the little granddaughter, whose picture was in death found close to his heart, will, together with her younger sisters, read them one day, and wish that she could have known her grandfather in all his charm and greatness for herself.

Whilst in Jamaica Railton's tour was darkened by the news of his beloved Esther's dangerous illness—the little daughter whose health in these years gave

constant anxiety to them all. He felt his absence deeply, and wrote to his younger son as follows:

'I wonder if you ever saw a picture of chain-making? I think I remember our looking at one. Every chain that is going to bear anything heavy has to be tried again and again to be sure it is all right. And, of course, the big cables that this ship depends upon when it anchors in stormy weather have to be up to the severest test. It would be awful if they only found out when the storm came that any link was weak!

'Now, it seems to me just as though God had been trying to see if every link of our family chain would hold against the strain of suffering and danger, and it seems to me worth it all, even this dreadful sorrow of Esther's illness, if we are quite sure now that each of us holds firmly to God.

'If we trust Him with all our life, whatever may come, we shall be ready to go through any and every strain so as to hear the great "Well done!" at last. How could He say "Well done!" if we only had to bear little common things like other people?

'But we are all called to a tremendous life of suffering and fighting for Him, and this sickness seems rather to strengthen than weaken my faith that all will come out just as He has planned for us.'

Railton's return from the journey on which he wrote this letter would have brought him to Margate on the very day when Esther was to undergo a serious operation. His wife felt that his return at such a moment would be uncomfortable for him. Her whole attention would be given to the little patient, and she would probably be unable to leave the sick room even to speak to him. She therefore had him met in London with the suggestion that he should remain away for a day or two longer.

No reply came. The operation had been successfully performed, and the doctors had just left. Mrs. Railton had straightened and darkened the room and sat down to wait for the child to recover from the anæsthetic, when the door opened very gently, and Railton slipped into a seat behind the screen.

At first his wife's feeling was one of distress, knowing that for hours to come she could not leave the child to make any arrangements for his food or well-being. But gradually his silent, tender presence became the greatest comfort. No apparent emergency tempted him to move or show himself and thus to excite the child, but he seemed to radiate love and sympathy of the kind that strengthens without enervating. Few fathers could have endured with such absolute self-control to witness in perfect silence the suffering of a dearly-loved daughter without making one sound or sign of his presence, and fewer still could have made their mere presence in the sick room so helpful.

The Commissioner encouraged his boys to question him freely and fully about anything that perplexed them, and when Nathaniel wrote asking him the meaning of book-making, and why betting was wrong, the Commissioner sent him a careful and lengthy reply :

'You ask me about betting. Betting is universally recognized as a bad and ruinous thing, though none of the silly Governments dare to suppress it and the bookmakers, as they ought to do. Betting is money promised for no real equivalent. A bet won means necessarily a bet lost; that is, A takes money from B not for anything supplied to B, but only because a bet has been made. Then this money, not honestly earned, is generally taken away from some worthy object.

'A bookmaker is a man who lives entirely by betting and causing others to bet, and nothing can ever make him honourable; though I do not mean there are not honourable bookmakers, or good tipsters, and many others connected with racing and betting. So far, that is, that they may honestly pay all they promise, deceiving nobody and doing nothing else connected with it which is not perfectly straightforward.

'Betting is, I fear, more widely and radically destructive than drink itself, and renders all who mix in it more and more callous to the losses and sufferings of others.

'May God spare and strengthen my dear boys to earn an honest living by honest work of some kind!'

To his eldest son, when about to attend a 'Young People's Sunday'* led by General Bramwell Booth, then Chief of the Staff, at Hadleigh Colony, he writes:

'There is no place in England to compare with Hadleigh, as you will feel when you have been there, and there is nobody like the Chief—not a man so highly placed in the country—who speaks out so simply and boldly to all sorts what you and I believe, and who is influencing so many young folks to give up their whole lives to it. God grant you the health and strength you will need, dear boy, for your, I hope, grand part in turning all to the best account for God some day!'

From Kimberley he wrote to Nathaniel revealing unconsciously the source of that constant and wonderful well-spring of pity and love which took him always steerage and fourth-class, and which opened prison doors and despairing hearts wherever he turned:

'How glad I am that you got into those prisons at Dartmoor, and that you felt exactly as I should have done about them! But do you know the sorrow of my life every day is to see so very little done for all the crowds of people to whom anybody could get if they chose to go, and with whom people could deal just as they liked if they only felt as we do.'

Again, in the same letter is advice probably based on his own experience in his years of 'Keeping on again and again':

'If only you knew how great a pleasure it is to get any writing from you, you would let me have it a little oftener. If ever you feel inclined to write me anything, if only one sentence in pencil, do it, and you will soon find it natural and easy. The way to get over the difficulty of a thing is to just go at it and keep on again and again until there is no more trouble in it.'

The Commissioner's letters to his daughter are full, not only of deepest love and compassion, but also of all the little incidents and happenings that he knows will cheer and amuse her. There is no evidence of

* All-Day Meetings for young Salvationists.

hurry or strain about any of his correspondence, and it is easy to see between the lines the pleasure he took in writing.

He possessed the power of picture-making in a few sentences, and had we space there are many charming touches from his letters to his children which we should like to include. He writes to Esther from South Africa :

‘Most of the people I see now wear about as little as one does in a Turkish bath; but having such a lovely dark purple skin I think they look best so. May God help us to get plenty of them saved.’

Surely never was the unadorned condition of the Zulus more picturesquely described!

From Japan he looks longingly homeward on New Year’s Day, and we read :

‘Whilst we all here and all the united Christians are praying for their children and families, I cannot but pray and think much for mine, that none of you may lose by my much wandering, but that all we have ever hoped and expected from God may be more than realized. And then my Esther will be indeed a “Star of the East.”

‘Your loving FATHER, anyhow.’

As the children grew up the approaching sorrow in Railton’s life assumed increasingly definite proportions. He and Mrs. Railton had differed, as we have seen, as to their education, and this same difference existed even more strongly when their future came to be considered. *He* was bent at all costs on their being Salvationists, whilst she feared that their health would preclude them from such a course, and allowed them to find their spiritual home in the Church of England.

The blow fell when his sons told him of their decision to go to the University with a view to Ordination. ‘Then,’ Mrs. Railton says, ‘my husband nearly broke his heart.’ He had, before his marriage, refused to read or go into the question of the settlements, and now, at this crisis in his life, he found that his father-in-law had so arranged matters (knowing Railton’s extreme views) as to tie up certain money

wholly outside their father's control for the specific use and education of his grandsons. They were, therefore, in a position to choose and carry through their own plans for life apart from him.

On the grief caused by this difference of opinion in the Railton family we do not propose to touch. No good cause could be served by enlarging on what gave such intense pain to the Commissioner. He seldom spoke of his disappointment to his comrade-Officers, but when he did, his words showed the intensity of his feelings.

But Railton, suffer as he might, never allowed himself to be influenced in the smallest degree from what he felt to be his own definite call to proclaim Salvation to the world. Whilst regretting and deploring his sons' decision with all the vehemence of his intense nature, he allowed no quarrel to arise; and although the family walked in different paths, he strove to avoid anything inconsistent with the spirit of a true Salvationist.

Deeply disappointed at their course of action, and refusing to condone the decision at which they had arrived, he yet sought to believe that they were actuated by right motives. Failing to enlist their co-operation in The Salvation Army, which he considered most akin to Christ's teaching on earth, he strove for the next best thing, asking from his children their whole-hearted consecration in the path of service for God which they had each chosen.

As he travelled and saw the vast fields of opportunity waiting on every hand for The Salvation Army; as he heard the cry from the different nations through which he passed for able and consecrated men and women filled with The Army spirit, the old wound re-opened, and he looked with infinite longing on his children, coveting them for service under the Flag he loved so well.

CHAPTER XXI

Wearing Out

'We never know how near we are to getting to the top. How much we shall regret it should we find out that in any one instance we stuck at the last few steps that should have given us a triumphant entrance, either into the Heavenly Kingdom or some great success ! Let us look up and step up !'—G. S. R.

LOOKING back over Commissioner Railton's life we see that he wore out mercilessly whatever of his being was 'outwearable.' His health failed, his strength failed, and towards the end his memory failed. 'The collapse of memory has been almost as complete as that of strength,' he wrote a few months before his death. But his spirit—that part of him which was immortal—never failed. The harmonies of his soul remained to the end as true and sweet as when he first learned the Divine chords of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

During these last years the Commissioner suffered a great deal from what he considered to be an unaccountable weariness—not weariness of the body only, but affecting his mind also, much as he strove to fight against it. He writes home :

'I suppose I am not well, though it only takes the form of weariness and sickness of heart. I am so manifestly older, and even here, where Meetings mean speaking very little, I am always fagged. Yet I dread nothing more than to become again a burden to you, who have had so much of it, and have yourself so very little attention from anybody. I feel ashamed of being so wretched. But do not be unduly troubled about me.'

The old temptation of feeling utterly useless beset

him too. There are few, if any, whole-hearted, energetic workers for God who are not at times tempted thus :

' The Lord has again seemed this week both to encourage me a little and to desert me a lot. If He does not choose to do any more by me, why should I care? I have been His Samuel of to-day as best I can.

' *Later in the evening.* He *did* come to our help wonderfully, giving us a real old-time Prayer Meeting with five yielding at a quarter past eleven, and two then running away ! '

And again :

' How sad it would be, if on the very threshold of some grand step I were, through loss of patience, to fail of the grace of God ; and besides, as I have no strength to struggle, I just have to let things drift.'

Several months of 1912 were spent in a tour in Canada, combined with a short visit to the United States. A most unusual thread of depression runs through all his letters. Though neither he nor any one else realized it, his strength was failing. The Chefoo doctor's diagnosis that his heart was ' all right ' Railton seemed to take as a perpetual guarantee, and insisted in facing and battling against Canadian snow-storms and blizzards, in spite of all advice or entreaty from those who knew both the dangers of extremes of climate and the Regulations of The Army.

' At night a blizzard made an Open-Air out of the question,' he writes home, ' but we marched round the almost deserted streets. . . . At the end I felt exhausted and altogether let down.'

He thought it strange that, after an experience of this kind, or a similar one in which he loses his voice for days, but insists upon trying to talk all the same, he should feel that—

' I must be ill or rapidly ageing. But then I go out into the brilliant sunshine and trot along over the snow and ice, trying to pray away my feelings.'

'I wish,' we read again, 'that I could be content to sit and enjoy all the books and papers in the fine billets that I get. They think here that I am not taking enough care of my strength. If compliments and real kindness could help me, then I should be in the best possible condition. . . . There may be much of this mere physical depression which I do not at all understand through not being used to it. What a shame to send you such a letter who are the burden-bearer for us all!'

There is a wide difference between these experiences and the depressions and frettings that rob the soul of its peace and eat like a very canker into the heart. The Commissioner's difficulty was undoubtedly physical. He was unconsciously abusing his long-suffering powers. Added to this, the clear, dry air and low temperatures over-stimulated him, leading him to exertions far beyond his strength.

Then, too, he found upon his arrival in Canada that he had been largely announced to 'lecture' upon his travels. This was something that he never liked to do. Yet he could not bear to disappoint the Officers, nor as it were, to 'let them down,' and give so poor a return for the universal kindness showered upon him.

'They announced me everywhere to lecture,' he wrote home, 'and you know what I think of that. . . . But you cannot imagine how it has affected me. I had no idea it would do so much to paralyze me altogether. The mere thought of it, taken along with all the rest, nearly handicapped me yesterday!'

Twice the Commissioner tried to lecture, but as one of the Canadian Staff recalls, 'he gave it up as a bad job, feeling that for him it was waste of time.' He devoted his energies instead to pressing for decisions for Christ, telling the people as an excuse for not meeting their expectations that he came to get them saved.

We doubt if it was ever granted to him to know the blessing he was to hundreds all over the Dominion. God has said: 'My word shall *not* return unto Me

void.' The Commissioner went on in faith, doing his best for everybody, never accomplishing all he felt he ought to have done; but leaving that, too, with the Lord, content that he had done what he could.

But we are allowed to know something of the other side. From the New Brunswick Division, where he stayed about two months, we learn :

' He made a most extraordinary impression wherever he went. Officers as well as Soldiers dated a new life and experience from his visit. His love for sinners, and the fact that all he cared for in life was the Salvation of men, that "everything had to stand for this," made an ineffaceable impression on us all. One Convert was won through seeing the Commissioner take off his overcoat in the Open-Air he was leading for a man to kneel upon at the drum-head, which served as a Penitent-Form in the muddy street. The room he occupied, and the table at which he wrote, when staying with a Major and his wife, have seemed sacred to them ever since.

' When travelling from Charlottetown to Maitland on the *Earl Grey*, they were held up on the ice for eight hours in a bitter cold and fog. During that time the news of the loss of the *Titanic* reached them, making the position more gloomy. Commissioner Railton, however, discovering that the ship's carpenter had a son in The Salvation Army, went off to his berth to have some quiet prayer and talk with the man.'

From Fredericton to Chatham they had to spend hours on an 'accommodation train,' with bare boards for seats and no food except the little they had taken with them. But instead of being annoyed at this, Railton seemed in better spirits here than on any other journey.

Another of his friends says :

' We were all deeply impressed with the intensity of his spirit and the apparently limitless character of his consecration to God and The Army.

' Travelling from Halifax to Sydney, a twelve-hour journey, I was waiting for the dinner-car conductor to make his usual announcements that lunch was being served.

The Commissioner sat by my side, and presently I heard the rustling of paper, and saw him take from his overcoat pocket a little bag of biscuits that he had brought from the Old Country, probably in that identical bag and that identical pocket! I told him that in a few moments we should be going into the dinner-car to lunch, but it was with reluctance that he put the biscuits aside, and yielded to my persuasion to have the meal which he most certainly needed.

'I think it was at Shelburne that a terrible blizzard raged, with snow almost waist deep. A Soldier comrade took the Commissioner to his billet. The night was such that no horse could travel, and it was with great difficulty that they struggled through on foot. But when they reached the door of the billet, the Commissioner grasped the hand of the comrade who had seen him there, and baring his head he poured out his soul to God on behalf of this man, just as though the summer sun had been shining. It was an experience the Soldier will never forget.'

During this tour, to his great joy, Railton met at Moncton his old friend, Commissioner Rees, then in charge of the Canadian Territory. Their meeting was of the warmest, for nowhere is comradeship closer or more precious than in Salvation Army circles, and the two were bound together by ties of many years' forging. But they had a serious difference of opinion over the matter of Commissioner Railton's departure. Rees, noticing that his friend's strength was failing, urged him to go home and rest, returning to Canada in the autumn, but Railton was eager to carry out a characteristic plan.

'I am sure you have some tired Officers in small, hard Corps,' he said. 'It will be quite enough rest for me to supply while you give them a furlough, and then I can resume my tour.'

Commissioner Rees very properly could not agree to this way of resting, and they parted affectionately, Railton promising to return in the autumn if at all possible. Little as either of them guessed it then, their work on earth was nearly completed.

No shadow of the approaching separation either seemed to rest upon The Founder and his first Commissioner, as they sat together at the little home in Hadley Wood, on Railton's return to England. He writes:—

‘I have had some nice times with The General, having supper together at 9 p.m. Then he enjoys walking out leaning on my arm in the dark and declaiming in precisely his old style (only with his stick to help him now) against everybody that does not exactly agree with him! And I am all the time mercilessly pushing him on to private as well as public work, for surely we cannot hope to have him much longer with us.’

The passing away of The Founder of The Salvation Army, in August, 1912, cannot but have been for Railton a loosening of life-long bonds; but his attitude at the funeral was, though startlingly unexpected even to those who knew him best, as we see now, entirely in harmony with his character.

‘It appeared as though his voice at that grave,’ says one who was present, ‘called us away from the sorrows of the present, and even from the achievements of the past, to a larger faith for the future.’

‘He seemed the embodiment of the words, “Forgetting those things that are behind, I press forward.” His one thought seemed to be how he could help the new General, and he was almost impatient lest we should linger too long mourning the old!’

He rejoiced in every victory, every triumph which met the new General, fervently thanking God for His wonderful provision in giving two such devoted Leaders as General and Mrs. Bramwell Booth to follow in the path marked out for them.

‘Our double-headed Joshua!’ was one name he had for them, and it is doubtful if he ever wrote a letter after The General's ‘accession’ without expressing his thankfulness that the prophet's mantle had so evidently fallen on these two! Watching their progress, and the affection with which they were received, crowned his last months with satisfaction,

His faith for them is beautifully expressed in a letter written a little later :

‘ It is my solemn conviction that it is the purpose of God to give you the Kingdom in a way we have never yet witnessed. Do not, I beg of you, let anything in the past, great and wonderful as it has been, blind you to the fact that He has immensely greater things yet in store for The Army.’

And again :

‘ Do believe me, dear General, I’m glorying in every stroke you take (whether I fully agree with it or not), because God is visibly backing you up, and prompting you to bigger and bigger things.’

In the closing days of 1912 he wrote characteristically, thanking General Bramwell Booth for the small but precious remembrances of The Founder—a white handkerchief and plain red waistcoat—which had been sent to him :

‘ How very thoughtful and kind has been your arrangement to let us have such family-like memorials of our dear departed Father in God as I can easily take along wherever I go, and show to people of every sort, in and out Meetings, with advantage to old and young ! They will be tokens not only of the fatherly affection to me of both Father and Son, but of your purpose to perpetuate simple habits of dress and action that will continually drive back all tendencies to fashion and show, or to easy-going, impossible religion. God help us to “ keep it up ” ever more !

‘ By the way, I have been much impressed to-day in reading of Gordon’s “ Praying Mat ” ! What a hit it might be to devise one for our use, made long enough for two to pray on, of some stout canvassy material, that could be washed easily, and used too, perhaps, as a sort of banner whilst carried. The deep, dark crimson colour of fishing-boat sails might answer the purpose. If they only cost 1s. or less they could well be renewed from time to time.’

Almost his last literary undertaking, the compilation of a short life of The Founder, was accomplished quickly and with wonderful ease, considering the

difficulty of the task and the amount of material he had to deal with. This life-sketch was then intended to be quickly supplemented by a fuller biography, the publication of which, owing to the war, was delayed for seven years.

Railton's attitude during these last months was that of a man preparing for a change—a journey, for instance, but one that meant the entire readjusting of his life and habits, something long contemplated that had come at last.

Not that he appeared to be in a hurry, though he gave the impression of trying to get in all he could within a given time. An increased spirit of love and tenderness and of gentle cheerfulness characterized him. It seemed as a heavenly perfecting of those virtues, for he had always been gentle and charitable.

In January, 1913, his health, while no stronger than usual, did not appear to be immediately declining. He writes: 'In spite of everything I am feeling tremendously well and confident of our success, yet I know I may be finishing any day;' alluding, as we remember, to his firm conviction that his call would be a sudden one like his brother Launcelot's, who died in 1907.

That indefinable intuition which, long ago, prompted the 'sons of the prophets' to ask Elisha: 'Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day,' seems to have been with many of Railton's Continental comrades at this time.

'I lodged,' says one, 'in the house where the Commissioner stayed. One evening he came home from his journey, and he was very tired, almost reeling from exhaustion. Though scarcely able to speak, he whispered, "I don't know what it is, but I think some great things are to come." As I looked at him, I thought that they were perhaps coming for him.'

An old friend of twenty-two years' standing recalls that: 'When I saw him for the last time in Dortmund, three months before his death, I felt I should never see him again. The next morning after our prayer I asked

for his New Testament. It was German. He had used it for many years, and I gave him mine in exchange. Next day I saw him off at the railway-station, and because he was tired I persuaded him to let me carry his bag part of the way.'

At Verviers, in Belgium, the Commissioner received an unexpected cheer and seal on the work he had attempted during one of the darkest experiences of his life. An Officer tells how part of the day was spent :

'I had heard a great deal about the Commissioner from those who had been so blessed by his life in America. I was therefore very glad to have the opportunity of seeing him. He was bound for Germany, where he was to hold special Meetings, but he managed to break his journey at Verviers, and give us a blessing in passing.

'He arrived at noon in a downpour of rain. After a scanty dinner he accompanied me to announce a Junior Meeting, in which he afterwards took part.

'He had not spoken Spanish for seven years, nevertheless he told me in this language about the difficulties of The Army's pioneer work in Spain ten years before. The Commissioner when there had been taken very ill and had been obliged to return to England.

'I was then able to tell him about a man who had been blessed and saved through his influence in Spain. Later this man emigrated to South America, where he became the Sergeant-Major of one of our Corps. Having been of a great help and blessing to The Army there, he returned to Spain, where he still worked as a Salvationist, though alone and unknown, waiting for The Army to re-open.

'Tears filled the Commissioner's eyes as he listened to this incident.'

Visiting Open-Airs, 'War Cry' sales and advertising the coming Meetings, occupied him until eight o'clock. They had eleven souls at the Penitent-Form of the crowded Hall. Not till 11 p.m. did he return to the Quarters, and the Officers listened to his pen at work until they fell asleep. By five o'clock his voice could be heard praying aloud, and by six he was in

the express for Cologne, where he had a glorious Meeting the same night.

Many sacred and affectionate recollections of his last visits to various people and places are before us, but perhaps the one to the wife of his old-time pupil and friend, Colonel Govaars, is the most typical of any, when, during a visit to Berlin, he had made his home with them. He always seemed to have a cheering mission to Officers' wives, and especially visited any who for domestic or other reasons were in the background. His simple, childlike religion struck them more forcibly than ever.

'Lord, help me to do nothing wrong to-day,' he prayed in the Colonel's home.

'Oh,' thought Mrs. Govaars, 'if *he* has to pray like that, what ought I to say!'

A hasty visit paid to her at the end of this tour was her last sight of him. She induced him to stay for dinner, and while she prepared it he went out to do a little visiting in some of the poor courts near by. Meanwhile, another Officer's wife came in hurriedly, hoping she was in time to say good-bye. She, too, was asked to remain and the three dined together. It was more like a sacrament than an ordinary meal! The Commissioner was very weary, but, as ever, so willing to counsel and help them. After dinner, as they sat and listened, the same thought occurred to both: 'Surely we are like Martha and Mary!'

When he left they stood and watched him down the street, and then silently turned and kissed each other. It was their last good-bye to the one who had been more than father to both.

In spite of failing health and a rapidly weakening heart, his interest in everything connected not only with his own work but with that of The Army in general, was unabated. Mrs. Booth's efforts to expose the White Slave Traffic specially pleased him.

'I am very busy,' he writes to a friend in France, 'with the White Slave Traffic and the new law that Mrs. General Booth so ably helped to pass last Friday.'

Then referring to some Meetings he was about to hold he suggests naively: 'Nobody knows me perhaps by name, and if instead of talking so much about the "Commissioner of the early days" they said that I would relate some curious facts about the White Slave Traffic, possibly it would attract the people.'

This was a characteristic touch and most indicative of the man. There were few towns in France where his name was not at least known, but even so, he was ready to sink his own identity to further the cause he had at heart.

From Rheims he sent a Christmas greeting to his Leaders as follows:—

'RHEIMS, 23/12/1912.

'MY DEAR GENERAL AND MRS. BOOTH,—

'God grant you, in spite of everything to the contrary, the best Christmas and New Year times of your life to date! I am so sorry that there should be so many family shadows over your pathway at the moment,* and yet even that is a sort of distinction that demonstrates the Devil's anxieties, though one cannot but wonder sometimes if there are such things as sleepy or tired angels who "really cannot" do all they are supposed to do for us and ours!

'The plans made for me here are splendid, enabling me to see so much of our France in so few days; and yet I must confess one of my first feelings was of doubt and penitence about being away from you at a time when there might be so many unusual chances in the writing way. But thank God for the telephone! And as I am mostly in such big cities it will be easy for you to call for any drafts you might wish for.

'We have absolute Open-Air liberty here, and I am not only enjoying the big crowds we get (I'm using my Japan-Chinese cap and band here), but even more the astonishing eloquence and energy of dear old Blanc. Marechal is even more able as a speaker, though she has not the voice (as yet) and is more philosophical. We got fifty-two inside at night instead of twenty-two of former Sunday, and I hope for better things to-night. We got only one girl and one man out

* The prolonged illness of their daughter, Captain Miriam Booth.

yesterday. The " *Traité des Blanches* " is a splendid draw-subject, but I had not learnt how to make the best of it for attack, and the audience protested so as to make four young rowdies who tried to interrupt clear out before I had the chance to fall upon them, as I had hoped to . . .

' Hallelujah! The big days are coming! Sorry not to be able to send draft of my French Life of The General, but hope to do it this week. Oh, the New Year you are going to have! Hallelujah!

' RAILTON.'

Some who have read thus far in the Commissioner's life-story will wonder, perhaps, how it was that greater efforts were not made to restrain or modify his speed. The reply is simple. Railton's reckless disregard for the natural laws of health was a constant source of concern to his Leaders as well as to his friends, but any attempt to induce him to slacken his pace only seemed to hamper and distress him. In vain he was implored, even commanded, to give himself a chance, and to be content with a working day of, say, sixteen hours. In vain he was reminded of the bad example he set the young Officers, who might be induced to fancy that they could best serve God and The Army by courting breakdowns, as he did. The Commissioner, as we have said, was ' Railton ' ; his reply would be merely an amused chuckle, and he would go his way irrespective alike of the representations of his friends and the Regulations of The Army.

* White Slave Traffic.

CHAPTER XXII

His Last Passport

'Far from expecting to live out much of my second half century, I know that I may any moment pass into the Overcomer's Fatherland. . . . To-day's great news to me has been that of Major Elmslie's* glorious rush up the railway station steps into Heaven, and I wish for no better ending to my warfare.'—G. S. R. on his fifty-second birthday.

'If ever I should come to a sudden end, whatever kind it may be, should like there to be no possibility of doubt in the minds of those who picked up my dead body that up to the last minute I belonged to The Salvation Army.'—G. S. R.

FORTUNATELY we have clear records of the last three Sundays the Commissioner spent on earth. The first of these was at Tunbridge Wells. Mrs. Booth was leading the week-end Meetings there accompanied by the Commissioner. Of his beautiful and sympathetic spirit during the day's fighting she has tender memories.

Both Mrs. Booth and the friends with whom she and the Commissioner stayed could not but notice how strengthless and exhausted he seemed. Nevertheless, before nine o'clock on the Monday morning, Railton, who had rejoiced over the harvest of souls; went off armed with a list of the Sunday's captures, to visit the new Converts in their homes. Love for souls was ever the passion of his heart, the driving power of his life.

The second of these three Sundays he spent with the Margate Corps, and largely devoted to the children

* A Scots Divisional Officer, who died suddenly in June, 1900, whilst running up the stairs to catch a train.

and Juniors he so loved. Mrs. Railton, who was present at a quaint Meeting led by him, says:

'In the afternoon he forsook the Senior Open-Air and led a demonstration of children on the sands. During the week he had himself taught them to sing choruses in twelve different languages. He begged them to spend their lives in singing Salvation, and strove to arouse their interest in the different countries. We marched together in front of the little troop, he rejoicing in their simple songs.'

This Sunday was also the Commissioner's sixty-fourth birthday. Mrs. Railton and the family were thankful afterwards to have specially celebrated the event. He went to Knee-Drill* on the Sunday morning as usual, and when he returned all the carefully-chosen gifts were lying beside his plate at breakfast. He found a pair of supple travelling slippers that would roll up and go into a pocket, a new travelling bag, a tiny clothes brush, and a new suit of uniform, over which he displayed unusual interest. He was pleased with all and deeply touched by the affectionate care shown in the selection.

On the previous day, Saturday, he had unexpectedly joined Mrs. Railton and a few friends in a little outing. They had planned to go to some country tea gardens for the afternoon, and were both surprised and delighted when he announced that he would accompany them. He insisted on wearing his little Chinese cap as a silent testimony, and after tea—though there were other pleasure parties in the gardens, amongst them a girls' school—he said: 'We'll pray; you needn't kneel down if you don't want to.' One who was present says:

'Our tea was all the nicer for such company, and the talk, as you may imagine, very much alive in every particular! The Commissioner was in the seventh heaven of delight about some special Meetings The General had just held with the Young People in Hackney Theatre, and we enjoyed to the full his talk and subsequent prayer round the rough benches and tables. His prayer was an inspira-

* The seven o'clock Sunday morning Prayer Meeting.

tion; it was a pouring out of his soul to God, in whose presence he so evidently lived. I was greatly blessed, and realized how much more there was for me to learn of the inner life, grasping more fully the meaning of a "life hid with Christ in God."

They returned to Margate in time for him to rush off to the Saturday night Meeting, and on the Sunday, as we have seen, he put in a full day from Knee-Drill till the end of the Prayer Meeting at night.

Looking back now upon that last week he seems to have been, though only dimly aware of it, preparing for some great event. He went all over his papers, finishing what he had tried to accomplish many times before; namely, the sorting out of his private letters. He had kept every little childish scrawl, every post-card and telegram from home, and every letter his 'little comrade' had written during the nearly thirty years of their married life. All were carefully tied up in small neat packets according to date.

Several times during that week he referred to his coming journey as one of great length. When reminded that he had only planned for a three weeks' tour between Holland and Switzerland he would assent as though he had been confused. The Saturday before he left his son David walked in unexpectedly from Ashford.

'Why, David, what brings you?' exclaimed his mother. He looked surprised.

'Don't you know father sent for me? He wrote that he was going away for a very long time, and I should not see him unless I came here now.'

Mrs. Railton laughed. 'He is only going to be away a few weeks,' she said.

Father and son spent a pleasant afternoon together, but the parting that evening was their final one.

Afterwards it was found that he had written a similar letter to his younger son, which to his lasting regret missed him. 'I am very sorry not to have seen you,' wrote the Commissioner, when he failed to appear; 'I feel we shall not meet for a long time.'

Being so sure that his absence would be prolonged he decided, after some consideration, to take two bags with him, the new one and the old one, and Mrs. Railton insisted on the unusual luxury of a cab to the station. She went with him, and finding the train delayed in starting, got into the carriage for a few last words. He thought that a lady in the compartment was feeling crowded, and explained, 'My wife is not coming with me this time.'

Mrs. Railton, when she got out, still waited by the carriage door, and as the train moved off she heard him repeat once again emphatically to his travelling companion, 'My wife is not coming with me *this time*.' 'Singular,' she thought, 'that he should say this twice to a stranger.'

On leaving the station Mrs. Railton remembered that the Commissioner might try to carry his two bags from St. Paul's Station to Headquarters, so she returned to send a wire asking that he might be met.

The next morning she received a happy little note which told her, 'I found your wire lying on my desk, but I got out at Ludgate Hill, and the old boy was as able to carry his bags as ever before.' Evidently he had enjoyed the joke of defeating her care.

He stayed a few days in London before he went to Holland, and one night returned to his Clapton lodging in a state of extreme exhaustion. He was too faint and weary even to take off his shoes.

'What have you been doing to get yourself into such a state?' exclaimed Adjutant Thompson, the old friend with whom he often made his home in London.

'Only walking from Queen Victoria Street,' he said.

'But why will you tire yourself in this way?' she asked reproachfully, thinking of those weary, slummy miles on a hot July day.

'I wanted to walk through the old scenes once more,' he said. 'I like to do it, for it keeps my heart soft!'

Slowly and wearily he had gone over all the old ground—the spot where he and The Founder had first

fought—Bethnal Green and the old Railway Arch; almost every corner was fraught with some memory. But thus he had taken his farewell of early battle-fields.

From Holland he described his Sunday at Rotterdam as follows :

‘ This has been so far the sensational week of my life. Not only had I all Sunday, but each evening we have had the most astounding Meetings, crowded and many standing. Tuesday night Soldiers’ Meeting, and Wednesday a huge Open-Air in a hollowed-out playground with the school seats to seat the folks as far as they could, and some hundreds more standing above and below. Never a sound or movement till the finish at 10.30.’

On the Sunday he crowded in as many extra Meetings as he could. When his hostess pleaded with him not to attempt so much, he laughed gaily. ‘ It is my last Sunday in Rotterdam,’ he said, ‘ and therefore I must do my *very* best to-day.’

He impressed everybody during those last days as being very happy. Tired out that Sunday night as he was, he nevertheless went home singing all the way! At four o’clock the next morning he was in the train for Belgium, promising to return to Holland on the Saturday. ‘ And then,’ he said, ‘ we shall go on with this campaign!’

The Commissioner arrived at Marchiennes au Pont, where he was to stay the night, and though orders had been given that no Meeting was to be arranged, they had announced him all the same. His host at Marchiennes tells us that :

‘ When I told him at the station that he was to have a Meeting at night he rejoiced greatly. He wished to write before the Meeting, so I took him into the drawing-room, and while he wrote I looked at the papers he had kindly given to me. All of a sudden I saw him fall asleep over his work, supporting his head on his hand. I did not like to disturb him, but I watched to see that he did not hurt himself with his pen. I should have liked to put him on the sofa, but I feared to wake him, knowing that once

roused he would not be persuaded to take further rest. He slept for about ten minutes, and seemed much refreshed.

'Before he left my wife asked him to write a "thought" in her Bible, and he wrote this:

(Translation.)

"May the Saviour of the world, who has saved us and leads us forward in His war for the Salvation of others, continue to strengthen us more and more in His service, so that the families yet in misery and bondage may become our comrades in every land. I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe, I believe for the victory. Hallelujah!"'

Next day Railton hurried on to Switzerland where he was to take part in a great Tent Campaign at Le Locle. The tent held some two thousand people, and the campaign was conducted by his old comrades, Lieut.-Commissioner and Mrs. Peyron. Another of his oldest friends, Commissioner Oliphant, Territorial Commander for Switzerland, also was present at some of the Meetings, and the two Commissioners enjoyed greatly their time of communion together.

During the few days Railton spent among his Swiss friends, he left the impression there, too, of being radiantly happy. He seemed, we learn, to have had a renewal, not only of physical strength, but of youth and joy! In a Meeting for Young People he told them of his conversion, of how he lost father and mother both within twenty-four hours; but how, though obliged to live a very lonely life for some years, he had never been alone—not for one minute since then had he lacked the feeling that 'the everlasting arms of Jesus were around me.'

He referred to his three favourite Psalms which he used to sing daily as a young man: the 63rd was his morning hymn, the 67th he called the Psalm of the nations, and the 103rd comforted him in his solitude.

It was a wonderful testimony, and not only those who for the first time looked into his shining face, but his old friends, who had known him best and longest, accepted every word as his life experience.

The wife of a Swiss minister who heard him writes :

' His French was graceful and correct, and he coined words to suit his meaning. He said, for instance, that in reply to the call of God, "I went to 'missioner' the people," making a verb unknown in the French language. His great love took in all nations. In his vision of saving the world he united his brethren from the furthest extremities of the earth.

' If ever he saw Salvationists who did not pray he was greatly distressed and reproved them sternly. During one Consecration Meeting he wrestled with extreme earnestness. Kneeling on the rain-soaked sawdust which covered the floor of the tent, and bowing his head to the ground, he cried to God in an agony, hammering the earth with his fists, "Lord, give liberty in prayer! Give liberty in prayer! "

This journey to Switzerland had been more or less spontaneously arranged. On board a Channel steamer Railton had received from a lady some information respecting the intended doings of an ex-Officer which he thought might injure the work.

' I would not worry so much about it,' he said, ' only it might trouble The General now he is just getting started.' His informant suggested that he had better go to Le Locle, as those who could give him the most authentic information would be there. The affair turned out to be of not as much importance as he had been led to expect, so he left Switzerland at the end of the week, relieved and comforted, upon his return journey to Holland.

When the Commissioner discovered that by travelling as usual third class he could not get through in the day, he must have stopped at Cologne to wait for the night train and to pay a visit meantime to the Officers there. The Captain proved to be one whom he had brought into the German Work, and the reunion was a very happy one. She and her Lieutenant provided the Commissioner with a simple meal, and at his request brought two or three neighbours into the room

that he might talk and pray with them. In conclusion he sang the old chorus :

Geh mit mir, geh mit mir !
Den ganzen weg von erde bis Himmel,
Lieber Heiland, geh mit mir !

Translation—

Walk with me, walk with me !
All the way from earth to Heaven,
Blessed Master, walk with me !

He stayed at the Quarters till 9 p.m., when he had to leave for his train, refusing to allow the Officers to see him off, notwithstanding their entreaties. 'But where will you sleep, Commissioner?' they asked anxiously. 'I must travel through the night,' he answered, 'and get to Amsterdam as quickly as possible.'

He reached the huge central Cologne Station, and the station-master, attracted by his conspicuous uniform, watched him rush up a long flight of steps to the luggage office, and then return, his baggage in his hands. He sprang into the train, which was about to leave, and the guard leaned over to examine his ticket. Instantly the man observed that Railton was ill, and with much presence of mind, lifted him from the train as it moved off.

The Commissioner was carried to the nearest seat, but had already ceased to breathe. Surely, by no shorter route could any man step into the life beyond!

Laying his body in the waiting-room the officials telephoned to the Men's Shelter that 'a Salvationist is lying dead at the station.' The tired Officers were preparing for bed, but the Captain sent a Lieutenant to see who the dead man might be, remarking, 'One of our poor people, no doubt.' It was with unbounded surprise and consternation that the young Officer discovered the Commissioner's still form.

It was truly characteristic of Railton that the largest coins to be found in his pockets when money was needed with which to pay the doctor's fee, were two Russian roubles, together valuing about 4s. International in his life, he was international in his

death, and his rule of personal poverty remained unbroken to the last.

The body was at once removed to the Men's Shelter, and there Railton 'lay in State' as he would have desired. Throughout his life he had been ever 'The Apostle of the Poor,' and it was therefore but meet and fitting that he should be 'With the poor in his death,' surrounded by those he so delighted to help.

Little did the Cologne railway officials think that as a result of their telephone message there would soon be mourning and tears in every quarter of the globe because the 'Salvationist lay dead!' But thus it was. Young and old, rich and poor, all shared in the same sorrow. What a testimony to the power of the conquering Galilean! Like his Master, this man had no big honours to bestow, no great wealth of which to dispose, not even the authority and influence of a great Command. Yet as the news of his sudden translation flashed round the world, cheeks turned pale, tears flowed, and hearts felt unutterably sad. Why? 'Because he was so good, and—we loved him.' Truly his were high honours.

Mrs. Railton, who with her younger son and Lieut.-Colonel Martin, late Chief Secretary for Germany, hurried to Cologne with all speed, wrote later an account of those days for the benefit of the many who held him dear. She says:

'How just like him; so exactly, after all, what we might have expected—that between a vigorous effort to help the War in two continental countries he should have paid a flash visit to the third! And so like his loyal love for Germany—that notwithstanding his failing strength he could not pass without a word of fellowship with some precious comrades there.

'No one but he, perhaps, has ever fully known how stupendous was the task he undertook and carried through during his four years in Germany. How he loved to praise and exalt our German Officers! He never seemed to realize that they were merely carrying through what he had taught them by his own example.

'The two days that followed our arrival at Cologne seemed full of sacred incidents. Now it was the Shelter-men who were kneeling round him, and weeping as they looked at the one to whom they owed so much. Or some very poor Soldier of the Corps, who seemed to gain fresh courage by remembering a word or action of his past visits. There was the dear old Sergeant who never wished to be relieved from his privilege of holding the Flag over the dead Commissioner, and had to be forced at intervals to rest. Bright little Meetings of the Men's Home inmates were held in the outer room, close to him, and just what he would have loved, with always an invitation to the Penitent-Form at the end. That room saw many penitential tears and heard vows of devotion to the Salvation War, as Railton understood it, from many lips.

'Last of all gathered the sixty Officers brought so hastily together as representatives of all who would have loved to come! Sixty! And they only representatives! And how gladly he had begun his mission to the Fatherland with hardly more than six! Sixty, and some of them veterans whose loving endurance he had thought beyond all praise. Oh, how they loved him!

"Germany's first Commissioner has fallen at his post" was announced on the gun-carriage on which he lay. And the great population of Cologne lined the streets for miles to see it go by.

'Never once through the long march did the singing or the playing fail to come up to his own standard of pouring Salvation into every one's ears. And at every step I thought of how the police used in some places to forbid him to walk abreast of one other comrade, lest the two together in uniform should "attract attention."

'I thought of his long weary tramps when there was no money for a tram; of his cheerful fastings when there was only enough to pay for a ticket on a twenty-four hours' journey, and none over for a cup of coffee on the way. . . .

'And then when the large public hall was reached there waited the great crowd of men and women. . . . It is not easy to handle a mass of people, largely strangers to The Army, all filled with excitement and emotion; but Commissioner McAlonan* steered through all difficulties, to

* Then the Territorial Commissioner for Germany.

the crowning result of many souls at the Penitent-Form. Backsliders and ex-Officers knelt side by side with sinners who scarcely knew how to pray.

‘And then once more a general consecration and a long, slow passing of all round the coffin for one farewell look.

‘We had taken out his last passport, and at four o’clock the next morning he began his journey “home,” with the final permission of the authorities of the Fatherland “to pass on unhindered and without delay.”

‘But the angels had brought him that permission a few days before, and I think he was already at work in another Land while we said we were “taking him home.” And so ended his last visit to his beloved Germany.’

A letter was received after his death, written to his home during that last day’s journey through Switzerland. He said :

‘I am having the ride of my life. The beauty of all that I see is beyond description. I shall post this at Basel, and then for Germany and Holland, *and what God will next.*’

‘R.’ could hardly have left a better motto for a Salvationist than those four words, the last from his pen—‘What God will next.’

CHAPTER XXIII

Laid to Rest

'The one thing that interested me in 1872 is that which interests me now as I am looking forward to 1912. I ought to be very thankful for all that has been accomplished in these forty years. If anybody could then have told me that I was going to be the Secretary of a Mission that would raise an Army which in less than forty years would be marching under some 18,000 Officers to rouse up all the world to the same purpose as that which I had, I should have thought that a good life's work for me.

'But The Army has, in passing, more or less aroused every Church in the same direction, and the number of Missions, Forward Movements, and other organizations formed during these forty years, far exceed in number and in influence all that The Army itself counts, and in every case there remains a desire to go forward.

'Further, I feel just as I did in 1872, before I read "How to Reach the Masses with the Gospel"; and I still consider the reply given in that pamphlet the only one worthy of notice, small as had up to that time been its progress.

'The Army at any spot where it fights according to its Orders and Regulations engages and satisfies all my time and powers.'—G. S. R.

AFTER its Founder, no Officer had so widely visited The Salvation Army field among the nations of the earth as Commissioner Railton. It was therefore fitting that all to do with the last honours should be International also.

The 'lying-in-state' was at Regent Hall, when hundreds passed beside the casket in loving and often tearful farewell. Commissioner Howard, then Chief of the Staff, with the International Commissioners, preceded the funeral car on foot to the Westminster Central Hall, where the Memorial Services, led by

The General, were to be held. The car bore on it in white letters the motto, 'He died at his post,' and was followed by the Territorial Commanders for Canada, South America, and of nearly all the European countries.

Everything was after Railton's own heart. The songs he loved so well were played and sung through the streets. Parliament was sitting, but for the first time for a hundred years special permission was granted for a Band to play as it passed the House. On reaching the Hall the Staff Bandsmen, putting down their instruments, joined in the grand old words :

Then in a nobler, sweeter song
I'll sing His power to save,
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Before the Procession left for the Cemetery, the next day, General and Mrs. Booth held another Service round the coffin as it rested in the Congress Hall, the scene of so many of the Commissioner's early triumphs. Commissioner Rees was among the speakers, and told of their life-long friendship. Railton's advice, he said, had in his Cadet days largely shaped his spiritual career. When the friends were last together—at The Founder's funeral—Railton had pleaded for a Canadian Missionary party to be set apart for service in the East.

Before another year Rees also had gone. Called away, like his old friend, in full harness; not from the busy platform of a Continental railway station, but from the deck of an ocean liner. Surrounded by his family and Staff on the way to the International Congress of 1914, he perished with them in the *Empress of Ireland* wreck. His last recorded words were, 'God will take care of us. His will be done.'

The streets were lined with people during Commissioner Railton's funeral march. At street corners where in days gone by he had been pelted with rotten eggs, rolled in mud or beaten black and blue, crowds

stood respectfully, hat in hand, and not a few were in tears. All classes of the downtrodden and friendless were represented. At the service itself an ex-convict made his way to Mrs. Railton. 'My father is dead,' he sobbed, referring to the Commissioner through whom he had been reclaimed in the original Prison-Gate Home so many years before. And on the long funeral march from Clapton to Abney Park it was pathetic to see a poor outcast girl, evidently mourning Railton's loss, walking near to his coffin.

Tenderly and reverently they laid him beside the first General. The two who for almost forty years had fought for the honour and interests of the same Lord, the same faith, and the same needy, sin-sick world lie together in death.

In connexion with all these Services the Commissioner would have found two special causes for joy. First, that Mrs. Railton, laying aside her own feelings, took her place as a true warrior's wife. In the last march she, with her sons and daughter, followed the loved remains on foot, joining in singing the specially chosen songs. Only inability to make her voice heard by the vast crowds assembled prevented her from speaking the messages which other comrades read from her pencilled notes, while she stood at their side. 'I want to do everything *he* would have liked' was her one thought.

The General in one of the Funeral Meetings said:

'I beg your prayers especially for Mrs. Railton. Amidst many difficulties and trials she has never withheld her husband from the battle's front. When we speak of him as being a great traveller, we do not, perhaps, remember how great a trial and test those long journeys were—often being cut off from communication for weeks together—to his comrade who sits beside this bier. So while we praise God for the Commissioner we also thank God for the spirit of his wife; and pray that His help and blessing will be with her and her dear ones in those lonely days which lie before them.'

The Salvation character of the Memorial Meetings

held in his memory all round the world would have provided the Commissioner with the other deep cause for thankfulness. Even beside his open grave penitents knelt claiming the Salvation he had loved to preach, and instead of dwelling on his talents or achievements, all, from The General downwards, sought to use the occasion in leading men to think of God.

In the Memorial Service General Bramwell Booth touched on the bond of close fellowship which had united him to the promoted Commissioner for so many years. He said:

‘Railton’s affection for me passed that of a brother beloved. My loss and the loss of The Army is great indeed. He was the last legacy left to me by my dear Father, who on his death-bed said in one of our parting talks, “Railton will be with you.”’

The General paused, and after an impressive silence added just three words: ‘And he was!’ showing that The Founder’s confidence in his first Commissioner had not been misplaced.

Before the first anniversary of the Commissioner’s death came round, one last Memorial Service was held at Abney Park on July 10, 1914.

Round the spot, hallowed to Salvationists everywhere, gathered representative Officers from all parts of the earth. The great International Congress was just closing, and those who had welcomed Railton in far-off lands when he appeared among them alone, unburdened with impedimenta, cheery, friendly, and believing, stood together at his grave.

A month later this Service would have been impossible. But on that Saturday, all undreaming that they were within a few days of the outbreak of the world war, Salvationists from the four quarters of the globe united to praise God for the blessings they had received through their Founders and their first Commissioner, and to reconsecrate themselves to follow in their steps.

And thus The Army laid its International tribute of love and gratitude upon Railton's grave.

'If I were asked to write his epitaph,' said General Bramwell Booth as the Memorial Meeting closed, 'I should make it this—

“HE BELIEVED GOD.”’

Here is the message of inspiration and courage that we trust this brief account of his beautiful life will carry to many hearts; here the reason he went Home 'more than conqueror.' Here lies the secret of his great power, his steady hope, and his limitless love for all. And here, too, is the key to the blessing he was made to thousands all over the world:

'HE BELIEVED GOD.' Do you?

Extracts from Railton's Writings

THE space at our disposal being so limited, all hope of giving lengthy specimens of the Commissioner's writings must be abandoned. The following paragraphs, exemplifying his style and force are taken mostly from 'The Officer' magazine:

NOTES ON ENTHUSIASM

There is no cause so hopeless as one without enthusiasm. The people who '*don't mind much*' are sure to go to the wall. This is why religion is now so largely jostled out of the road.

* * *

People can only be thoroughly aroused on something in which they have personal interest. And the extent of their personal interests or hopes in any cause is just the measure of their enthusiasm.

Look at the action of a political opposition trying to turn out a strong party and get their place!

* * *

Enthusiasts are expected to take consequences. To be despised, abused, ridiculed, maligned, is nothing. If they really care they go to prison, and lose money, health, business, life, with joy for the cause. Test The Army by this. Illustration—our experiences in Switzerland, United States, India.

* * *

Any want of enthusiasm about Jesus Christ is execrable. If the Good Friday story be false, what an abomination to let all society revolve around it! But

if it be true, and not only true but thoroughly recognized and published amongst six at least of the wealthiest nations that ever lived, what an abomination that enthusiasm for Him should still be rare!

* * *

What do we want? What He wants. The eternal overthrow of all evil and the universal enjoyment of the fullness of God's love and blessing. A big programme; calling therefore for all the wider devotion.

* * *

But remember, enthusiasts in any good cause are the pioneers of the future. Just in proportion to the extent of their execration to-day is their elevation to-morrow.

PILATE AND HIS WATER BASIN

Pilate for eighteen hundred years before the gaze of the world with endless orators describing his every look and word, and writers expounding it by the volume.

Oh, the eternal dragging out to the light of every word and every act against Jesus! How is it that the fools who quibble about 'eternal punishment' cannot see the impossibility of anything else?

After all the centuries Pilate stands there washing still, and he gets no whiter and his silly words acquire no better sense! The soul that will not have Christ must go on hearing its own excuses for ever. The Devil not only prompted Pilate's action, but the wriggling that makes it memorable for ever; and our weeping and wailing will not lessen his savage purpose to make us all as everlastingly wretched as himself.

PLEA FOR THE NON-CHRISTIAN NATIONS OF THE EARTH

European Missionary Societies, confessedly baffled, weak, and almost in despair with regard to the vast nations of the Far East, whose learning and profound religious thought they can no longer deny, are begin-

ning to confess openly that India, China, and Japan must be evangelized by Indians, Chinese, and Japanese.

But although it is often admitted that the climates of Africa, and even of the Southern States of America, make it impossible for the white man sufficiently to evangelize the negro, there are scarcely any who really hope to see negro leaders produced, unless it is by the slow process of saving the children, which means an excuse for abandoning the present generation to the Devil.

The negro, without books, and often perhaps without the ability of learning from them, may well be despaired of by those who only hope to lead men to Christ by means of texts!

* * *

Oh! that I could impress upon my readers the vast responsibility which we of to-day possess for guiding, with a big enough faith and boldness, the desires, purposes, and leanings of the forces who are now learning under us! So vastly important is this, that I see compensation even in the present avalanche of wars and rumours of wars with which we are surrounded!

If only cannon-balls will properly wake us up, may the cannon-balls rain! For no amount of destruction they could work can ever compare with the deliverance that can be wrought in the earth by ourselves and our successors if we only take a big enough view of our powers and opportunities, and then act upon it.

FRAGMENTS

I never could see why it should be more contemptible to work in a kitchen than in a shop or foundry, a coal-pit or an office.

* * *

The supremest masterstroke of devilish cunning is to persuade people that it is 'more loving' to say less about Hell; 'more kind' to let the Devil get his

victims in the dark. God help us to be more outspoken than ever about it all!

God forbid that any of us should sink down into contentment with little things, still less with nothing! He will manage to make His mighty saving power felt through us anywhere if we are thoroughly determined it shall be so.

And in the dullest place where God may ever require us to hold on, we may at least gain in our own soul and mind and heart what will help us to be ten times as valuable as we were before we went there.

* * *

How shall we explain that joyful and loving spirit which makes the most disagreeable tasks or alterations of plans seem welcome crosses, and the saddest disasters opportunities for some extra act of devotion? There is only one way to account for it all—that sincere, deep, inner subjection to the one Lord which makes us all truly brethren, no matter how far apart we may be in locality, opinion, or habits.

* * *

Why should we not hope that this militant party of Jesus Christ (The Salvation Army), ever persevering in its abstention from all political or semi-political agitations, may yet pervade the whole land with an untamable resolution to subdue every influence opposed to that of Christ, and to make our country secure against every invasion of a thoughtless infidelity, a reckless commercialism, or a degrading pleasure-worship.

* * *

As long as you live you cannot hope to be useful if you are not able to hold on where all is dark and drear, just as well as to 'go in' with all your might when a chance comes to deal with a big crowd.

We shall never know till we get to Heaven how much of the victory that looked as if it were won amidst big Sunday congregations was really gained by comrades who scarcely ever appeared to be 'anything much.'

Either the entire Gospel is a cunningly-devised fable, or Christ must remain always and everywhere the same, ready to receive the sinful soul, to pardon its past, and then to breathe into it that breath of life that shall make it, in turn, and from that very hour, a seeker of other souls.

COMMISSIONER RAILTON'S THOUGHTS

The following was written in a 'Book of Thoughts' belonging to the daughter of one of his old friends :

MY NAME IS—George Scott Railton, and I think

1. THAT POETRY—has been made a great blessing to many, though not consciously much to me.
2. THAT MY FAVOURITE POETS ARE—Salvation Army ones and the Wesleys.
3. THAT HISTORY—is being daily made in our Army more gloriously and blessedly than elsewhere.
4. THAT THE GREATEST HISTORIANS ARE—those who tell most about Christ.
5. THAT FICTION—is a natural resource for those who have got nothing in reality.
6. THAT THE NOVELISTS I PREFER ARE—those who have left it all for God.
7. THAT A COUNTRY LIFE—may be very happy and useful for those who cannot get to the War.
8. THAT A TOWN LIFE—is the most natural one for all who care for their fellow-men.
9. THAT THE GREATEST LIVING STATESMEN ARE—Emperors and Kings.
10. THAT MY FAVOURITE HEROES AND HEROINES ARE—Salvation Army Soldiers and Officers.
11. THAT MUSIC—as taught and played by red-hot Salvation Army players is incomparably the best.
12. THAT THE MOST DELIGHTFUL COMPOSERS ARE—Salvationists.
13. THAT THE FINE ARTS—may yet be more and more roped into the service of The Army.

14. THAT THE FINEST PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS ARE—those who do most good.
15. THAT READING--of the Bible and our publications is profitable to every one everywhere.
16. THAT MY FAVOURITE BOOKS ARE--the Psalms, Joshua, and Jeremiah.
17. THAT LOVE--to men of every nation can be fully cultivated.
18. THAT MARRIAGE--has been glorified and utilized in The Army more than anywhere else in history.
19. THAT DRESS--can be made one of the grandest means of advertising Salvation by us.
20. THAT MY FAVOURITE PURSUITS ARE--Soul-hunting and Soldier-making.
21. THAT MY FAVOURITE AMUSEMENTS ARE--voyages and travels.
22. THAT MY FAVOURITE FLOWER IS--at present, the Chrysanthemum.
23. THAT MY FAVOURITE FRUIT IS--the banana.
24. THAT I WOULD LIKE MY FRIENDS TO BE--red-hot Salvationists.
25. THAT THE WITTIEST SAYING I KNOW IS--'Ye who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel,' a witicism also too commonly justified in our days also.
26. THAT THE FINEST PASSAGE OF POETRY I REMEMBER IS—

Jesus the Name high over all,
In Hell, or Earth, or Sky,
Angels and men before Him fall,
And Devils fear and fly.

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SALVATION ARMY INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS

DECEMBER, 1919

Countries and Colonies occupied	70	Persons without rank wholly employed	6,261
Languages in which Salvation is preached	42	Local Officers (Senior and Young People's)	71,419
Corps and Outposts	11,173	Bandsmen (Senior)	26,181
Social Institutions	1,276	" (Young People's)	6,417
Day Schools	751	Songsters	27,805
Naval and Military Homes and Hostels	41	Corps Cadets	17,384
Officers and Cadets—		Number of Periodicals published	82
Field and other Work	14,903	Total copies per issue	1,384,990
Social Work	3,418		
	18,321		

SOCIAL WORK

Shelters and Food Dépôts (Men)	96	PRISON-GATE WORK	
Shelters and Food Dépôts (Women)	11	Homes	16
Food Dépôts (separate)	15	Accommodation	515
Hotels for Working-men	114	Ex-Criminals received during year	2,180
Hotels for Working-women	29	Number passed out satisfactory	1,776
Total	265	INEBRIATES' HOMES	
Total accommodation	25,233	Branches	8
Beds supplied during the year	7,019,797	Accommodation	294
Meals supplied during the year	14,970,817	CHILDREN'S HOMES	
MEN'S INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTIONS		Branches	87
Homes, Elevators, Work-shops	163	Accommodation	3,344
Woodyards	10	Crèches	31
Total	173	Industrial Schools	25
Accommodation	6,233	Accommodation	1,471
Men supplied with work (temporary and permanent) during year	55,310	WOMEN'S INDUSTRIAL HOMES	
LABOUR BUREAUX		Branches	116
Branches	123	Accommodation	3,894
Applications during year	97,745	Women received during year	7,970
Situations found during year	79,193	Passed out satisfactory	7,101
		MATERNITY HOMES	
		Branches	38
		Accommodation	1,042
		* * *	
		Farms	25
		Slum Posts	190
		Other Social Institutions, including Hospitals, Village Banks, etc.	179

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